This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

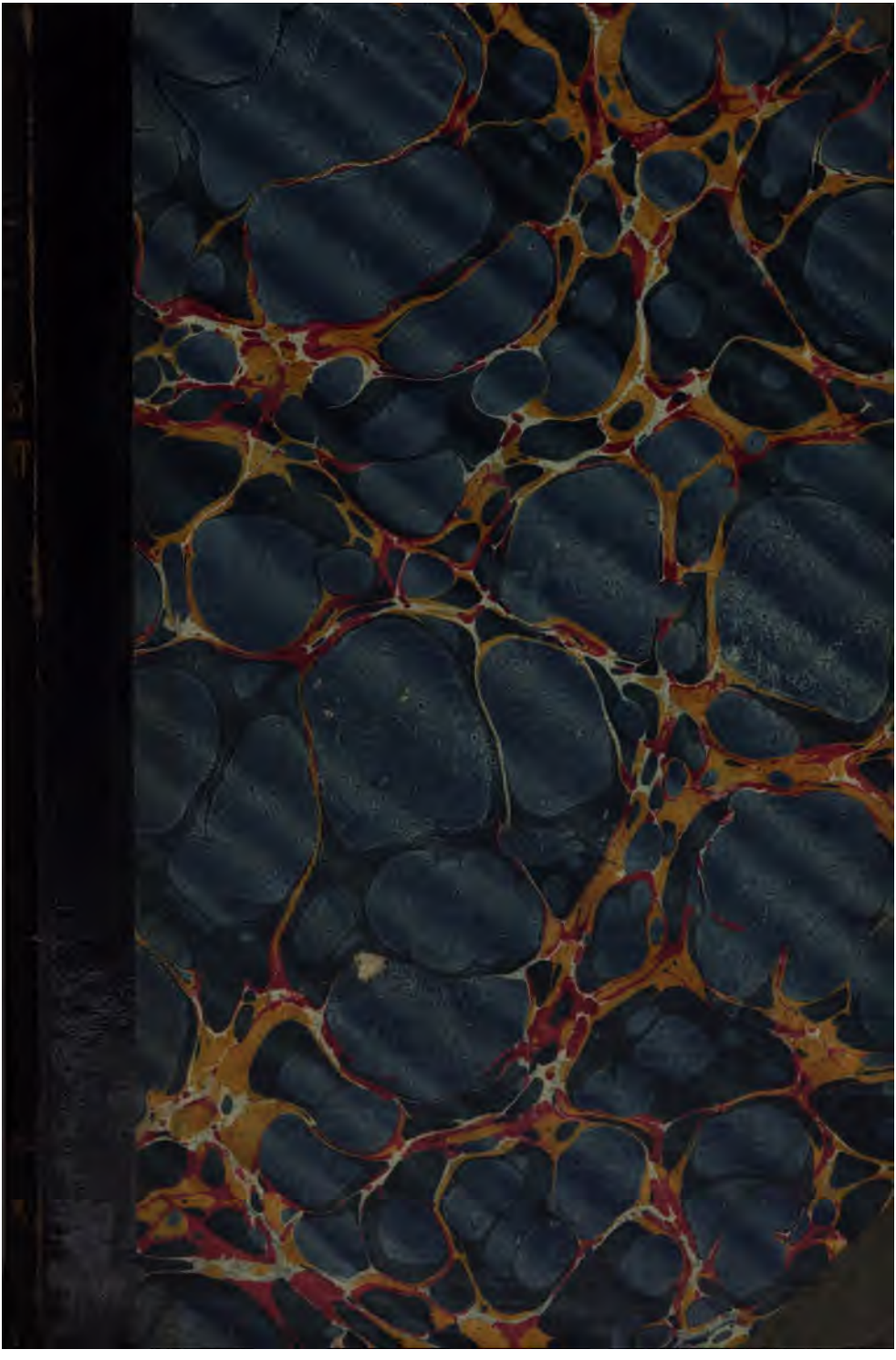
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`



600059729

CHARLES OLIPHANT.

A NOVEL.

By W. JAMES, Esq.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

London:
T. CAUTLEY NEWBY, PUBLISHER,
30, WELBECK STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE.
1857.

[*The right of Translation is reserved.*]

249. w. 38.

CHARLES OLIPHANT.

CHAPTER I.

THE decay of an ancient family resembles that of the old oak which has braved the storms of a thousand years, but at last ceases with the return of spring to put forth its leaves and afford shelter to the low shrubs that arise at its feet.

Standing gaunt and alone, its dry limbs are exposed to the summer sun, and the rain and dews visit by night the relics in vain. Dry as in the evening, the sapless branches meet our gaze with returning day, till tired with the

natural ruin we almost wish it could sink into the earth and leave room for a new tenant of the plain.

Such, alas! too often is the feeling with which men contemplate the decline of their fellow men, and wish them away, when their strength or their fortune no longer realises the results of their prime. The feeling is shared even by its object;

"Veianius armis
Herculis ad postem fixis, latet abditus agro."

Mr. William Oliphant, of Morden, succeeded to the remains of his family estate while yet a cadet in India, and soon afterwards threw up his chance of wealth and honor, at a still early period of life, to return to the home endeared to him by youthful recollections. But his father, who had begun and continued through life in extravagance, to supply his necessities obtained an Act of Parliament to sell part of his estates, over which fictitious debts were accumulated, by

the advice of Mr. Thomas Frankover, his agent. That gentleman transferred himself from Edinburgh to Morden, and soon doubled the entail debts, thus creating a necessity for selling nearly the whole estate. The father's extravagance continued, and he died in poverty, leaving Mr. Frankover rich, and pretending to take care of the little that remained. Instead of the broad lands which the son had known as his ancestors', before leaving for India, nothing awaited his return but some acres in the immediate vicinity of the family mansion and the mansion itself, too large by half for his altered fortune, and in many parts falling to decay from disuse. To this state of matters Mr. William Oliphant on his return did not patiently submit. From Frankover he received little satisfaction, for that gentleman had purchased part of the lands himself, and paid most of the price with his professional charges. Believing himself wronged in his youth and during absence from his native land, Mr. William Oliphant instantly and ener-

getically set about questioning the whole transactions and debts for which the sales had taken place; and, as India produces men of business as well as soldiers, he soon became able to make it apparent that the grossest wrongs had been committed in fixing the debts for which the lands had been sold. But as all had been done under authority of Parliament, and parties who had purchased the lands knew nothing of the debts or of the objections which lay to them, but paid their money in the ordinary way, it seemed highly improbable they could be affected by Mr. Oliphant's objections to the mode in which the business had been transacted. They were, however, the parties with whom he must enter into debate, for they held the lands; and the creditors of his father or the creditors of his ancestors had received the price, and were not disposed to part with it, and most of them unable had they been willing. In this situation Mr. Oliphant began his operations against those now in possession of his estate.

He had a restless activity of mind that prompted him to engage in the management of his own suit, and without the knowledge of legal terms or forms, which is gained by professional experience, to embarrass both his counsel and the court which was to decide the cause, with his own crude and novel ideas on points which had undergone full investigation long before. Hence unconsciously the court itself began to regard him unfavorably, and to treat even well founded views and arguments with something approaching to contempt; but nothing daunted by this, he still maintained the same views, and insisted on giving them importance and prominence. He had now arrived at that period when a final decision was to be given, and was preparing to leave for Edinburgh to be present, and to find realized the adage, that he who is his own lawyer has a fool for his client.

But as law no more than war can be carried on without its sinews, and his means were all well nigh exhausted, he repaired with some mis-

givings of success to the house of a neighbour well known for the weight of his purse, to endeavour to borrow a little from him to open the final campaign. Taking his only son Charles with him, now a lad of eleven or twelve years, he walked through the woods that surrounded his house, and soon emerged on the waste that formed the domains of his friend Mr. Andrew Waldie, the Laird of Doolford. Wading through the red heather, he reached the green and stunted fields of oats that surrounded the Laird's humble mansion, situated on a rising ground which gave a tolerable prospect of the hills and bay of Lumfannan. It was approaching to the evening of a sultry summer's day. The cows stood lowing for their calves from which they had been separated at milking time; labourers worn with a long day's work were returning from the meadows to supper and bed—the solace of the toiling poor; the carts were unyoked and the horses led to their stalls. These operations were superintended by Mr. Waldie himself,

when he was suddenly surprised by the appearance of Mr. Oliphant and his son, who entered at the old wooden gate always half open, and began to ascend the rough stony road.

"What brings them just at present," thought the Laird, "something very particular must be designed." He had a respect almost innate for Mr. Oliphant's family, which had afforded at one period protection to his ancestors in perilous times.

With these feelings, he hastened forward to welcome Mr. Oliphant, who had advanced almost to the door of the Laird's unpretending mansion, and caught a glimpse of his sister, Miss Jenny Waldie, who had been engaged in driving the cows to their byre. She was afraid to be seen in this humble occupation, and in dishabille by one of Mr. Oliphant's rank, and hastily escaped into the house to improve her toilet, and make some preparation for the great man's reception, mentally resolving to give her brother a few words of admonition afterwards, for

allowing her to be surprised. Her age was now near sixty, but she still retained the remains of a fine countenance and handsome form, though a little inclined to embonpoint: indeed she had at one time been a toast amongst the young men of family in the neighbourhood, on account of her unusual beauty. Her black eye still shone with lustre, and showed that her understanding was lively and undiminished in vigour. The rose had not vanished from her cheek, her teeth retained the pearly whiteness of youth: she was one whom nature had endowed in youth with great personal charms, and with great mental powers, which are not often found united; and age had not been able to impress his furrows or his whiteness on her open and cheerful face. It may seem extraordinary she was never married; but it was not for want of offers. She had rejected various, and it was whispered that her visitor, Mr. Oliphant himself, was in some degree the cause. It was certain he regarded her with eyes of affection, which so displeased his

parents, the difference of rank being considerable, that they hurried him away from his native fields and woods, in which he was dreaming of love, to share the business of life in the fields of India. The chidings of parents, and the whispers of ambition, are too powerful antagonists for the gentle passion; and absence intervenes to diminish, though it never can root out, the earliest occupant of the heart, whose image haunts the breast of man from its first entrance till his feelings cease to play. In India, Mr. Oliphant married the daughter of an officer of rank, who, dying in childbed, left him an only son—the boy who now accompanied him, Charles Oliphant.

Hastily adjusting her head-dress and hair, and having slipped on an old-fashioned gown, Miss Waldie was soon ready to meet Mr. Oliphant, who received her with a compliment on her looks that put her in the greatest good humour, and determined her, already sufficiently disposed, to extend the best hospitality the house could afford

to him, had he not stopped her by intimating, that his stay must be short, and that he only desired a few minutes' conversation with her brother. He introduced to her his son, who she declared was his image, and such as she remembered him many years before. A sigh escaped the father at the recollection; and she too would have sighed in turn, but for the guard which feminine delicacy placed on her heart. The Laird had a glimmering perception of something not worldly having intruded itself into the conversation; and hastily cut it short, by conducting Mr. Oliphant into another apartment, and committing the son to the charge of his sister. She led him away, to entertain him with the homely but, to his boyish taste, the pleasant fare of a well-filled dwelling, butter, cheese, cakes, and milk.

In the mean time, Mr. Oliphant laid his request for pecuniary aid before the Laird, who, as he feared, at once gave him a decided negative.

"The law licks a'," said the Laird: "I ance employed a writer myself to sequestrate, as they ca' it, a tenant, widow Maxwell she was, wha had a sair fecht wi' the warl, and was beat at last; and a' I could get did but make a sma' hole in the haill rent—he clean sooped up every thing amaist wi' expence. Am thinking your writers and advocates in Edinburgh are waur still, Mr. Oliphant—ill to feed, aye hungry, greedy gleds; but deil be in me, if their nebs and claws fin' living in my lan'."

Mr. Oliphant, seeing at once the hopelessness of making any impression on his close-fisted worldly neighbour, turned the conversation to other subjects; and, as soon as the Laird's attention had been sufficiently engrossed with those, he rose to take his leave.

Miss Waldie, for women are proverbially quick on such occasions, had, by putting odds and ends of the country's conversation together, arrived at a tolerably correct surmise of the object of the visit, and contrived to place herself where

it was fully confirmed by her own ears. She was grieved at her brother's refusal, and the coarse terms in which it was conveyed. Leaving her hiding place, she repaired to an old chest, where, amongst napery, gowns, shawls, and blankets, lay the old linen bag, in which she had been accustomed to deposit her small gains in the management of her brother's household; and without much consideration, except for the appearance of the purse, and certainly without examining the contents, brought it down stairs, and gave it, firmly rolled up, to young Charles Oliphant : " Tak that bag, my dear, and give it to your father when you both reach home, and not sooner."

He received it in ignorance, and without suspicion of its contents, and promised to follow her directions. He had found a way to her kindness by his likeness to one who had touched her youthful heart, and his manners and address, at once gentle and respectful, secured and even increased his ground. Mr. Oliphant speedily

bade good bye to the Laird, and in presence of his sister, who was thus compelled to a ceremonious parting.

Homewards father and son passed through the woods in the twilight—the former with an anxious and swelling heart, the latter desirous to speak of anything, but conscious that his father from his countenance was in no mood to answer him upon what was understood by both. In silence they reached home; and the father was about to retire when his son presented him with the old bag—"A present, sir, and an odd one, surely, from Miss Waldie." The father received it in silent wonder, and retiring to his room emptied out its contents of old gold coins, amounting to about £300. A tear blinded his eye as he felt the full force of this evidence of her early attachment. He slowly replaced the gold and threw himself on his bed in that paroxysm of passion that heaves the breast when accident presents a relic of one loved and long departed.

CHAPTER II.

A MORNING in May arose in gloom, after a violent storm, which began shortly after Mr. Oliphant's return, and continued throughout the night. On looking down the bay of Lumfannan he saw the distant rocks at its mouth were white with foam. Scarcely did the lazy clouds rise above the lower hills, while their highest peaks were concealed by thick darkness. Nature herself, he thought, sympathised with him in his desolate and difficult condition. But go he must to the legal battle.

His first care was to despatch a letter to Miss Waldie: its contents were never known, for till

the last she maintained an entire silence upon the subject. She read it, and hurried to her room, and would not again appear for several days, even though her brother himself, alarmed by her condition, and helpless without her assistance, exerted himself to alleviate her grief; but of its cause all in his house were ignorant; several had seen a letter delivered, but supposed it was for himself, as Mr. Oliphant had been engaged with him the evening before.

In the meantime, Mr. Oliphant with his son set out for Woodport, a distance of a few miles. It was early, yet some loiterers hung about the inn in the High-street, to whom he was not unknown, and who remembered his family's splendour in other times. His approach on foot with his son caused some sensation, more especially when Mr. Oliphant, on going to take his place in the coach, found inside his worthy friend Mr. Frankover.

Frankover, with inward satisfaction and pride

veiled by external humility, bowed to Mr. Oliphant, who without recognising the salutation hastily withdrew and betook himself to the outside. His son in the buoyancy of youth and spirits saw nothing to wonder at in his father's change of seat; he would see places where he had never yet been, could speak with Coachee, who received him with a cheerful look, and was assiduous in helping him to his high and honored throne. Any place in Mr. Oliphant's opinion was prēferable to a tête-à-tête with Frankover; especially as he now began to reflect they were both proceeding on the same errand, on interests diametrically opposed. His situation attracted the attention of the innkeeper at whose door the coach stood, at the usual hour, who cherished an habitual veneration for the family which was shocked by seeing its head in a stage coach at all, and still more an outside passenger.

"Ye maun gang inside, Mr. Oliphant, and there's naebody in it," he said, (till drawing nearer he recognized Frankover.)

"Yes, there is somebody indeed, but he's just naebody beside you. I see hoo yere out noo. Touch not pitch. But an I had kenned ye were gaun, ye should hae had the coach to yoursel. Deil anither passenger should hae gaen, and least o' a' this ane that's inside. I could fin in my heart to poo him oot, but ye wad na like that neither."

Part of this extraordinary speech was overheard by Frankover, though spoken so low as almost to be whispered; and he cherished it in his memory, to be produced in vengeance against this zealous adherent of Mr. Oliphant on a future occasion. He to whom it was addressed replied, with a smile, that the public conveyances were open to all without distinction, and the outside was now his choice.

"Weel, weel," said Boniface, "I see hoo it is: but wrap up Mr. Charles's neck, for the blast is aye snell about Crosshill. Wife, I say, wife: bring him a comforter. We can get it from him when ye come up." The landlady, notwith-

standing all opposition of Mr. Oliphant, would comply with her worthy husband's directions.

Even this little incident discomposed Mr. Oliphant, nearly as much as the unexpected sight of the inside fare; and it was a great relief to his feelings when at last, after a tedious delay, occasioned by the usual packing of luggage, the coach rattled off along the rough pavement so loudly, as to put an end to speaking or hearing. The fresh breeze and brilliant morning, for the gloom had passed away, braced the spirits and lighted a ray of hope in his bosom. Frankover lay within his hole; and on arriving in the afternoon near the ancient town of Broughton, Mr. Oliphant resolved to stop there for the evening, in order to get quit of Frankover, even though time should be lost in accomplishing his journey. An indefinable feeling of repulsion kept him uneasy when in any close proximity to that gentleman; and what may seem strange and puzzling to account for, though the other was perfectly aware of Mr. Oliphant's senti-

ments, he seemed desirous always to press himself on his notice.

Mr. Oliphant therefore left the coach before it reached the town, and turned from the road into a footpath, which led down to the stream of the Redburn, and along its banks; and the din of the rushing waters was a welcome change after the long drive. The sun was setting gloriously without a cloud, and the shades of evening began to deepen in the glen, through which the waters sometimes toiled and fretted, and then murmured gently away: the voices of birds became less frequent, as they struggled up the branches to the perch; even the stream at last seemed to lull itself by a softer sound to rest.

Some pleasant days of Oliphant's boyhood had been spent in angling on its side; and he knew each bend in its course, each little puzzle in the footpath. After an hour's walk, he turned off, and began to ascend the rising ground, and gained the high road above the little town of Broughton.

The setting sun threw his golden beams across the Firth of Clyde, whose green waters heaved gently under the mild light of evening. Here and there a vessel seemed entering the darkness of gathering night on the distant ocean; nearer the shore was heard the knock of the oars of returning fishermen. Their children had crowded to the beach, and matrons came with baskets to the boats. The workmen in field or on house-top, or at the forge, seemed to collect their strength, and work with more vigour as the day came to a close. It was a pleasing scene, and Oliphant lingered on it, pointing out its beauties to his son, as they walked towards the inn.

The landlord, like other landlords, was pleased to see a guest approach, and not the less from the deposit that had been made from the coach of travelling goods, which he at once conjectured were his guest's, as he confirmed. He had scarce time to ascertain all this, when another stranger came up from the beach, where he had landed from one of the boats, who told the land-

lord he had left a ship passing up the Firth, that he might see who was living on the shore; and was about to march into the best room in the house, when the landlord intimated it was then occupied. This did not satisfy the new guest, an Irishman, about forty, well set, strong in body, with a black sparkling eye, and clear complexion, armed with a heavy shillala, and enveloped in a dreadnought, his head adorned with a glazed hat.

"By Jasus, landlord, I have found your Inn, and you must find a room in it for me, and here, by my sowl, is another gentleman who has found it like myself; and who has the room?"

The landlord endeavoured to explain to him that the renowned economist Maximus Alexander Quivox, Esquire, of Quivoxmuirhead, was inside, perhaps engaged in some sublime speculation, and having honoured his Inn, it would be wrong for them to disturb him.

"Make my respects to that same gentleman, Mr. Foxwood, and say that Felix McKitterick,

Esquire, of Kitterick Castle, in the County Down, and this other gentleman," turning to Mr. Oliphant, (I have not the honor of knowing your name, my dear), will be glad to be introduced to his acquaintance, or stay, I will introduce myself," said he, opening the door of the room, notwithstanding the landlord made a move as if to resist his entrance.

Mr. Quivox he found seated at table enjoying an excellent dinner, and not apparently pleased with the entrance of two strangers; but as the appearance of Mr. McKitterick and his easy, cool address, showed a man not to be quietly removed, with another to back him, he, in answer to Mr. McKitterick's salutation of him by the name of Foxley, said,

"My name, sir, is Quivox."

"And no great mistake at all, at all, Mr. Quivox, but you must blame the landlord for it, I am Mr. McKitterick; I remember an Englishman once called me Mr. McKitten, and I bate him for not apologising, but this you must settle

with the landlord; in the meantime, Mr. Quiv I and this gentleman will join you in disposing of that salmon."

And without more ceremony, McKitterick seated himself and prepared to begin the attack, inviting Mr. Oliphant to follow his example.

Quivox seemed at first much disposed to resent this free and easy proceeding, but considered it more politic on the whole, to swallow his dinner in silence, than to run into a quarrel with a furious Irishman.

Mr. Quivox was about sixty, and somewhat corpulent, dressed in a brown coat with large tin buttons, a yellow vest, a wig of brown hair on his head to conceal a total baldness; but his cheek and eye, and stomach, too, showed health and vigour, and he was a political economist at table on this occasion, having deliberately helped himself to the larger portion of the viands while McKitterick and Oliphant were getting forward their chairs.

McKitterick stared at the sudden disap-

pearance of what he had a minute before marked as his own.

"By the powers has the landlord run off with the salmon before we can get to the table! Oh, Mr. Quivox, you have been mighty hungry I see, but landlord boil another, and you and I, sir, (to Mr. Oliphant), can take anything Mr. Quivox does not transfer till it comes."

Mr. Quivox, having obtained this victory over the intruders, and having hastened to dispatch the remainder, at last threw himself back in his chair, and said to Mr. McKitterick,

"So, sir, I think you said you were from Ireland, I had almost discovered it."

"By Jasus, and no mighty discovery if you had."

"A noble country, Ireland," said Quivox.

"Yes, by the powers, it is," muttered McKitterick.

"For the politician," continued Quivox, "and the political economist, a grand field for study, experiment, and discovery. If the true prin-

ciples of the great science are once known to more than one or two, their general knowledge will be derived from Ireland or from myself, who have anticipated these discoveries, and have been travelling amidst the darkness of prejudice, misgovernment, and ignorance, onwards to the perfect light, while all else were loitering and falling asleep; but these mists may be dispelled. You, sir, and many others of your countrymen at present out of Ireland are complained of, and are called absentees, and it is said that injury is done to that country by her wealthy citizens residing in foreign countries. This is one of the great and palpable errors of the people; it is one of the most obvious of the delusions by which the ignorant minds of your countrymen at home are tormented. You and other wealthy natives of Ireland, by living abroad not only do no harm to your country; you do her a vast amount of good."

"By the Lord!" exclaimed McKitterick, "I am delighted with you, my jewel, for when I

turned off one or two auld dependants on leaving, I had some little bating about the heart, but you will make all right."

"Yes, sir," said Mr. Quivox, "and let me show you how it stands. The absentee, reside where he may, consumes the produce of the country where he resides; and that becoming scarce, a supply is got from Ireland; or if he spends his money among foreigners for luxuries they will have the more means to buy the produce of Ireland; so that ultimately the pressure of the demand operating equally like water finding a level, Ireland will suffer nothing by the absence of any man or any number of men."

McKitterick expressed himself astonished at so profound a view of the subject, and added that he thought the more men Ireland sent away the better for them that remained.

"It is precisely so," said the Economist, "and, sir, another blunder often committed by superficial inquirers is to suppose it were better for the Irish to consume their own beef, mutton,

butter, and flour, than to send them away out of the country. The more of these that are sent out of it and the less of them the Irish consume, the better."

McKitterick seemed lost in amazement at the announcement of these views, but the Economist, without seeming to notice this, went forward to the proof;—

"For," said he, "the more money will come in as the price of that produce to pay the rents, and the more money will your countrymen have to purchase the wine, and oil, and silks, and broadcloths of other countries."

"By Jasus!" said McKitterick, "there are mighty few of them drink wine, and wear silks."

"Nothing to the purpose, sir," retorted the Economist; "they have the money, and of course must hoard it up and get rich."

"Wonderful is the extent of your science," said McKitterick.

"There has been," continued the Economist,

"a senseless outcry raised against the truth being told of the utility of wars, pestilence, and famine, as if these were evils to mankind. Viewed in their proper light they must be considered as benefits; for those who survive their assault have the more for themselves and for future generations. These are the frosts, the ice, and the snow of the moral and political seasons. And to pass to the interests of the empire at large : it is supposed that Britain is benefited by her many colonies,—that their inhabitants consume her manufactures,—their wants employ her shipping. They do both, but would do the same though we had not a fort or a soldier, a governor or a judge, in all these colonies. We require not the command of these countries, and should not incur a vast expence in numerous armies to keep them in subjection or to conquor new territories. My plan is to withdraw from Canada, commit India to the care of its native rulers, deliver Gibraltar to the Spaniards, and Malta to those who want it.

We shall then have all the benefits and incur no expence."

"By Jasus!" said McKitterick, "Britain then will look mighty small indeed, and her people will have less to do in the affairs of their neighbours: I wish I could return to teach my countrymen these things; but you must go and enlighten them."

"I have sometimes thought of it," said the Economist, "but I must first silence my opponents in this country before I can find time to bring your countrymen to listen to these great truths."

Somewhat late in the evening, just as there appeared symptoms of disagreement betwixt Quivox and McKitterick, a gig arrived to convey the former to a friend's house, and he departed. McKitterick turned to Mr. Oliphant, whose thoughts had been occupied so exclusively with his own affairs that he paid little attention to his neighbours, and said,

"You seem well tired, sir, and that you may sure enough be, of the baste's conversation that is gone. But I hope we may enjoy the evening together."

Mr. Oliphant made a faint effort at reply, and told McKitterick he had had a tedious journey, and must continue it next day."

"Well, well, my dear, we'll go together. I know not where you are going."

"To Edinburgh," said Oliphant.

"Ah! the very place I am bound for myself."

Mr. Oliphant would have been glad to avoid this honor, but he was obliged to say they would meet in the morning, and then with his son retired for the night.

McKitterick, whom whisky had made frolicsome, issued from the inn to see the beauties that appear, as he said, to most advantage in the evening; but after a short excursion, in which he once or twice found himself in danger from

men who understood neither gaiety nor humour, he returned and told the landlord to keep Mr. Oliphant till he came down in the morning, as he intended to honor him with his company for the rest of the journey to Edinburgh.

CHAPTER III.

MR. OLIPHANT reached Edinburgh the following afternoon. He got quit of his travelling companion Mr. McKitterick with as much politeness as possible, but he had better have tolerated him as a relief from his own sad thoughts.

There is no one who approaches the termination of a contest, which has been carried on vigorously and expensively, without glancing back along the road by which he has advanced, and discovering errors made in the course of his journey which later experience would have cautioned him to avoid. Human life is, indeed, as mankind have hitherto acted, and perhaps will

continue to act, notwithstanding Peace Associations, a state of warfare, whether in savage or civilized society. The sword and spear of the one are superseded by the pen and ink of the other; but the interests and passions which set both to work, continue the same; and the business of mankind seems still fated to be a struggle by each with more or less of skill, cunning, industry, and perseverance, to increase his own heap at the expence of his neighbour. Yea, while there is thus continually going on in infinite variety of ways the struggle for gain betwixt individuals, there is also a banding of class against class, of the great patrician against the humble plebeian, of the rich against the poor, of the skilful against the unskilful. It may be that man is short-sighted in his selfishness, and falsely alarmed, and needlessly anxious about individual or personal security. It may be that he should take less heed for the morrow, nor cease to live while engaged in his struggles to increase the means of existence. But, alas! for him who

should humbly propose for imitation the great founder of the religion we all profess; such a one would be esteemed as little better than an idiot, an impracticable dreamer, ignorant beyond redemption of the arts which are most valued in this world.

And if not one man but a nation were to endeavour to reconstitute the social system so as to render more equal that which is so unequal—to make all participate in what makes man to pass through his appointed time in this world without an incessant struggle with the bodily evils of cold and hunger, and in the enjoyment of those mental capacities common to all men, the attempt would be scouted as ridiculous, and too certainly its failure predicted; there has not accordingly been even an attempt made by any nation to reduce the rules of religion to practice, and not much ventured by individuals. The words and the precepts of its founder are to be sure often in the mouth, but when have they been put to use? Are they too difficult and

unfit, or is the human race, after so many centuries, in the infancy of religion, as a practical guide in worldly affairs, or is her standard too high and holy as fixed for all time? Who shall answer these questions, or who in the darkness shall pretend to descry where light may arise?

Thoughts not dissimilar to these were passing through the mind of Mr. Oliphant as he was preparing to attend the Court. His son was most anxious to accompany him; but though willing to gratify him in so apparently simple an affair, he dreaded that the boy might be unable to manifest that composure that is by the custom of the world so necessary to be observed. He was at that age when the feelings are not under much control, and had a dim perception of the depth of his father's anxiety, enough to make him wish not to leave his side. Their love was mutual, and therefore it was not with so much difficulty that he succeeded in assuring his father that he should not discover by his behaviour any feeling, whatever might be the result.

At the usual hour they repaired to that curious scene, where so many of those interests which are perpetually clashing, receive a solution. It was to the boy new and striking to an extraordinary degree. The bustle and seeming disorder and confusion, the crossing and re-crossing of the floor of the large old Hall by the advocates to the different bars—the crimson dress of the judges sitting high above the crowd, one or two, in fine contrast with the black array of the moving crowd below—the shrill cry of the Macers—the vastness of the room with its antique roof of oak—the adjoining inner court with its assembled judges, all held him for a time in a state of mute admiration. Mr. Oliphant himself entered into consultation with his counsel and solicitor, and not far off Mr. Frankover and several of those who had an interest on his side might be observed similarly employed.

As when two boxers enter the ring and throw up their caps, the crowd of spectators, busy themselves in contrasting their weight, look,

condition, manner, and often shrewdly determine the issue before the fight is begun; so in legal logomachy much may be learned by the knowing onlooker from the aspect and address of the litigants or of their champions.

Too much appearance of confidence, too much flightiness of manner betray a weak cause, and so do too much stillness and humility. But while Mr. Oliphant's had a large portion of the last, his antagonist's champions were cool, yet cheerful; and his antagonists themselves caught spirit from their looks. It seemed as if they were determined to win. Even young Oliphant's soul sunk within him, for a short experience will sometimes teach many lessons, on meeting Frankover's gaze; but afraid to give his father the least suspicion that he could not command his countenance sufficiently for the occasion, he turned various times from the apparent look of triumph with which Frankover seemed to regard him, to make some trivial enquiry of the person

who happened to stand next him; but sick at heart and trembling with agitation.

On a sudden the loud cry of the macer calling the cause was heard, and the boy felt as if he would drop on the floor. He recovered himself by a strong effort, and mechanically followed his father; and soon mixed among the crowd pouring in, glad to hide in its pressure and professional curiosity his overpowering feelings.

The usual legal arguments ensued in court, which are only interesting to those who gain or suffer by the result of the case, and to the legal audience, and Mr. Oliphant (for such is the whispering of hope) did not think the points pleaded for him were looked on unfavourably, till one after another the judges delivered adverse opinions, accompanied with sarcastic comments upon those views which he had himself thought were irresistible, yet were scattered to the winds by the close and unwavering assault of the veterans on the judgment seat. The only thing that seemed to create a momentary hesitation,

and especially affected the features of Mr. Frankover, was an enquiry by one of the legal sages on the bench, whether Mr. Oliphant's guardians had been duly called into court in his absence. Apparently sufficient evidence on this head was found amongst the mass of documents spread out on the table below, after some examination, during which, Frankover's confidence forsook him. That being found, however, doubt vanished, and the judgment of the court was unanimously against Mr. Oliphant.

Frankover and his party bore their victory with assumed moderation. Oliphant hastened to escape from the scene of his defeat and of his adversary's triumph, as speedily as possible, and his kind hearted and zealous solicitor in vain attempted to afford some crumbs of comfort, where he knew there was room for none; as, from Mr. Oliphant's circumstances, he was but too well aware he was a ruined man.

In this dark hour, young Charles kept up his courage, and even dared to bid his father to

hope. He was met with a withering smile, which long after he remembered, and they returned to the inn. There Mr. Oliphant abandoned himself to grief and despair, and refused to be comforted. The poor boy stood by his bed side silent and in tears, while his father, like the Scottish monarch after his defeat at Solway Moss, turned his face towards the wall, broken hearted. His thoughts gradually threw him into a burning fever, in which he required to be restrained by the united strength of several men. Recovering from it, reason returned; but he sank gradually, and felt his end approach. He called his son to him, whispered a few words as he gave him the ring off his finger, kissed and blessed him, fell back, and expired. None were present on the sad occasion but the suffering and weeping child: it seemed as if Oliphant's misfortunes had frozen the hearts of the many respectable families with which he was connected by birth, though not by prosperity.

His solicitor, Mr. Anwood, who had ever acted

towards him with generosity, did not neglect what was due to his memory after death; but ordered a funeral suitable to the rank he had held, which was attended by Mr. Oliphant's relatives, who had neglected him when alive. Sympathy with the dead costs little: it is accorded, because it is looked for by the world, whose censure the men who live for it dare not despise—it is accorded, because it is soon over, and the scene of misery covered up by that veil which no more can be raised.

To the astonishment of many, Mr. Frankover also attended; and as at the meeting of the relations, after the funeral, there was some talk how the son should return home, that gentleman at once volunteered to take charge of him, which seemed an extraordinary stretch of generosity on his part: and he had credit for it with those, who knew something of his previous history. The boy indeed shrunk from his society; but as all were glad to be relieved of responsibility, and all agreed it was very proper, he dared

not to raise a question against the common opinion. Mr. Frankover promised to return next evening to the inn to bring him away; and he was left desolate, young, and a stranger, his only earthly protector withdrawn, to expect from above that support, which comes down by the ordination of Providence to the young and unfortunate and innocent, so far as we dare to call them so, of the race of man.

CHAPTER IV.

THERE is not any place where a sense of loneliness so oppresses the young heart as a crowded city, in which the stream of human beings presents no one face that claims interest in its joy or sorrow.

As evening drew on, and the hour approached when Mr. Frankover was to return to fetch the boy to his own hotel, the necessity of being prompt in action became more apparent to him, if he would escape the superintendence or the tyranny of one, for whom he entertained so strong an aversion. He had none to consult, and with his own soul he must deliberate.

Though not watched in the usual sene, he knew his motions would form the subject of observation. If he could avoid detection, he resolved to make the attempt to get away; but this was not easy, and must be accomplished by giving no ground of suspicion at first. The landlord, as landlords are wont, was loitering about the door of his own inn, ready to make one with any guests who wanted him, jolly, free, and good-natured, but yet having an eye to what was going on around; and he knew well the boy was totally unable to find his way to any place at a distance in the town, or back from it to the inn. It was necessary to keep fair with him. The gate of the church-yard, where the funeral had taken place, stood open, as it was not unusual for some of the inhabitants to revive recollections of friends who lay below, by wandering over the grounds, or some stranger to peruse the gray memorials of those, who had perished in the political and religious contests of the times of the Stuarts. To go into it appeared to

young Charles not likely to raise the landlord's jealousy—in fact, the boy, while going in at the gate, caught his attention, but merely to draw forth this remark to his helpmate:

"I declare, wife, that puir laddie's awa back into the kirk-yard. He's like mony ane besides that has their best freen lying in the mools."

The mistress replied, "Weel, weel, just gae wa' and bring him oot again. I like nae kirk-yards at ony time, least o' a' at nicht. We'll a' be there sune eneuch and lang eneuch."

"I will bring him gently out," said the landlord, "for I pity the puir bairn."

At this moment, when about to follow in at the gate, a traveller drove up to the inn-door in a chaise, and for a short time engaged the attention, exclusively, of both landlord and mistress.

He was, as the former afterwards said, "a wee particular," and would have both himself and his horses instantly attended, for they had come far,

and the landlord guessed easily he was a guest not to be slighted.

In the bustle occasioned, and the various orders given by this consequential person, the landlord for a short time lost all recollection of Charles Oliphant.

The boy gradually moved round the eastern corner of the plain old building, and crept within the shadow of the wall of the church near which the fresh raised turf and higher hillock pointed out his father's resting place. The tears chased each other down his cheeks, and his sobs were in the stillness, painfully audible.

The sun was almost set, but his parting rays lighted up here and there the broad slabs around. In the purple beams innumerable motes were dancing round and round, and each moment the gloom seemed to gather and to render more striking the solitude, which was complete, though the roar of the crowded streets might be heard at times, faintly like the sound of ocean on a distant shore.

Fear seized him of the night being about to produce something terrible, as he had not lived so long in the remote district where Morden is situated, without hearing those ghostly stories with which children are so foolishly interested and alarmed.

It seemed it would be safer to return, when the fear of Frankover recurring to his mind, more powerful than imaginary spirits, fixed his determination to escape from the place.

With this view he crept along the wall whose side now intercepting the level rays of the sun, made it almost impossible to see him till he came to a part which a stunted yew tree had bored through and overturned, and had been allowed to extend its boughs partly to fill up the gap.

Through this he made his way, not the less quickly that he heard the voices of persons approaching in earnest conversation. These, his anxious heart at once whispered were the landlord and Frankover.

It was so; for when the latter arrived at the Inn, he was informed by the landlord that the boy had been seen to go into the churchyard.

So short a time, it appeared, had elapsed that he did not think flight was possible.

No surprise had been excited by his entering the churchyard; it was so natural to return to sigh over a parent's grave, that Frankover even waited a little time his reappearance, still without any idea that one so young, and inexperienced, and destitute, would venture on so decided an act as to withdraw himself by flight. At length becoming impatient, and even reproaching the landlord for thus allowing the boy to escape his view, who on the other hand represented he had not undertaken to watch or to restrain him, they both became thoroughly on the alert and betook themselves to the churchyard in the confident expectation of finding him. They easily reached his father's grave, but the son was not near; they called his name in vain, none answered,

the vaults re-echoed it: unheard indeed it was by him thus anxiously sought.

He made his way across the park immediately adjacent, then sprang lightly over the wall which bounded it, and found himself in a road along which many were walking, the most part of them to the western quarter of the city. Those who saw him get over the wall were nowise surprised in a youth of his age, and he mingled with them safe in the darkness and their indifference, and at a quick pace soon reached the outskirts of the city.

On looking back, as if he felt he might be pursued and seized without warning, even at that hour, he only noticed that the road was becoming solitary, that lights gleamed here and there from the windows of the old castle, from whose walls the evening drum could be heard summoning the soldiers to their quarters.

Frankover now seriously alarmed as well as chagrined, vented his ill-temper and disappointment upon the landlord of the Ram's Horns, who

was by no means disposed to submit to what he thought blame beyond the occasion; and, under no obligations to that gentleman, he replied with courage, "I was not the young gentleman's keeper; his father was my guest, and his agent paid me, and I think I have no farther concern in his son or his motions." Thus they parted. Mr. Frankover repaired, though it had now grown so late, to the High Street. The evening being fine and labour done, the street was as usual, crowded at that hour with the lower orders. tradesmen, soldiers, women, policemen, children, and vagrants, of every age, beggars, ballad singers, applewomen, and dealers in small wares. The flowers of Edinburgh perfumed the air, as usual, wafted on the breeze, from the long, dark closes that rib the hill and ascend it and issue in the High Street. It was with difficulty and jostling, in his haste, various of the saunterers that he discovered amidst others, so like in many particulars, the stair of the house, where an old acquaintance carried on business as a messenger at arms.

Nicol Adamson and Frankover, both natives of the same place, had begun life together, with equal chances of success, and minds somewhat similar; but fortune had directed the latter early into the service of the Oliphant family, and thus to more profitable employment. Fortune had made Adamson a messenger, and being endowed by nature with a large share of industry and dexterity, he contrived to obtain some reputation in his humble profession. Frankover wound his way up in the dark, now in danger of being thrown down by some one descending, for the houses contain as many inhabitants, young and old, as the streets of some towns; and now in danger of tumbling headlong on the worn and dirty steps. To him the dangers and difficulties of the way were not new, even at that hour, though years had passed since his course of life had carried him to other and more pleasant places; but time operated little change in the condition of these lofty dwellings, only a little for the worse in the character of the oc-

cupants, as the extension of the new town to the north was carrying away, year after year, the better class of inhabitants.

After enquiring at various doors, where he was answered with more or less civility, he at length found himself at Nicol's landing place, and on knocking at the massive door, liker that of a jail than a dwelling house, it was opened by an ancient Sibyl, Nicol's sole domestic, who ushered him through a winding passage into the messenger's business room. He was not there, but enjoying his bottle of ale with some brethren of the blazon, in a tavern not far off. Frankover impatiently paced up and down, while the old servant was absent to fetch him, which she soon accomplished; nor had the ale been allowed by Nicol to make any material innovation on his senses, for he had felt by experience the necessity of being ready at all seasons for business, which, in his profession, often came at unexpected and unseasonable hours.

After mutual salutations Frankover briefly

explained to him the flight of young Oliphant, and his desire to trace him; and he did not omit to remind Nicol, who became uneasy at such allusions, of one or two things regarding the summoning of the father and his guardians in the cause decided to their mutual satisfaction some days before, which it would have been agreeable to both to have slurred over for ever. The hint operated powerfully in setting Nicol's professional sagacity to work, which long practice besides had not a little sharpened.

"He must," said Nicol, "be found; and the lad canna hae gane far; Colinton or Currie, or Penny Cook, or Mussleburgh, or aiblins Dalkeith. I'll be up by skreigh o' day, and scour the haill o' them, and we must fin him. But what if he refuse to come?"

"Why, bring him," said Frankover.

"But I hae nae warrant—and then wrongous apprehension and imprisonment—that would afford fine work o'er in the house yonder."

"Tut, you fool!" said Frankover. "He is

but a lad—a mere calf. Bring him as if you were his father, or his uncle."

"Or his Dominie," said Nicol.

"Very good, Mr. Nicol Adamson," said Frankover, "you now speak like a man of business."

"But what's he like," said Nicol, "what are his marks?"

"Oh, the lad is slight, but vigorous in person, olive complexion, black eyes, speaks very well, dressed he must be in black, for we buried his father but yesterday. You have besides, my sharp friend, a pretty good recollection of the air and features of the Oliphant family. It is not to be mistaken or confounded with the vulgar crowd of mobility or gentility—an old race with the grace of manner, person, and address that proves it, which has not escaped your remark at home more than mine. Such a one walking alone is easily distinguished by your eye, Mr. Adamson. Let me see him in your paws. We have both, you know, though the father is

dead, some reasons for wishing him well away also to a happier land."

Nicol slightly started at this suggestion, but Frankover, to drown any reflection, immediately added,

"And you know the great nabob, Mr. Ostertoun, bought some of the lands of Morden; and understanding enough of law to comprehend where there is danger, will join me in rewarding you handsomely. Let me only see the boy."

This touched Nicol still more effectually, as he saw the pay would far exceed due reward for any trouble he was likely to have in so simple an affair, and he renewed his assurance of setting out early with an assistant, in case he should meet with trouble or resistance.

"I wad hae asked you doun to Peter's to tak a glass for auld lang syne, had I no to be up sae sune the morn."

Frankover affected not to hear this, as he now found it convenient to forget more of his own origin and early habits than was absolutely

necessary; he was willing to recollect their acquaintance in some business, he was resolute against remembering or renewing their humble parties, which still continued the same to Adamson.

"You seem, Mr. Frankover," said he, "to have taken leave of your mither tongue as well as o' your cheerfulness; I kenna if ye have dune better."

The shot though fired at random seemed to tell upon the hitherto impassable man. He instantly checked a reply, however, which would have been in some sort a confession, and asked Adamson to show him the way down his break-neck stair, which no stranger, he pretended, could ascend or descend after sunset.

"There's as much abune," said Adamson, "but where shall I bring the lad if I find him?"

Frankover gave his address, and going down the difficult descent, succeeded by the messenger's word and lighted candle, in reaching the street, which now had assumed comparative quiet,

as the busy crowds had retired, and even a dark night left the tall grim piles of houses to stand out in lines that were well defined from castle to Canongate, even at such an hour.

Frankover, who acted with energy and untiring industry in whatever he undertook, sought out, far in the night, the residence of Mr. Ostertoun, one of those, who, having acquired a larger part of Mr. Oliphant's estate, was interested to a still greater extent than himself in the law-suit which had terminated so favourably for them. Ostertoun was called from his bedroom, to which he had retired, as Frankover insisted on seeing him, and had sent up his name, that more effectually silenced the complaints of disturbance, which the old Indian was sounding forth against his servant, than if he had received a blow in return. On entering the drawing-room where Frankover was, he enquired with agitation what was the cause of his visit at such an hour. Frankover soon explained this, and the explanation was not particularly agreeable

to one, who, like Mr. Ostertoun, had acquired a large fortune in the east, and returned to enjoy it in the evening of his days in his native country; and who, as his part of the Morden estate was greatly larger than Frankover's, was, if possible, more anxious in all matters that tended to bring their rights into danger. He heard, with an indefinable feeling of dread, of the sudden withdrawal of Oliphant's son, for he was his sole heir, and thus the only one that would probably put them in danger again. He could hardly forbear questioning the vigilance of Frankover, and told him he ought not to have trusted the boy a moment out of his sight, after obtaining the consent of his relations to take charge of him home. Frankover defended himself at first with mildness, but afterwards with more vivacity, as he was conscious that blame was not imputable to himself; and at length Ostertoun, who felt he had said more than the occasion justified, and, in giving expression to his disappointment, wounded the feelings of another,

was obliged to apologise for the harshness of his observations.

"You must not, by George, trust to Adamson alone, Mr. Frankover," said he, "but employ every means to find out and secure the boy; for I have observed that, at long intervals and when least expected, the lost one is found, or somehow turns up, and infinite danger at once arises. I have seen, Mr. Frankover, in India, by George, men after an action returned as dead, suddenly appear, and cause scenes, ludicrous and sometimes, too, very serious. You can perhaps guess them, without my telling a long story."

Frankover nodded, aud acquiesced in the truth of all his friend said, and promised to make every exertion; "but at all events," said he, "that man, who would be dangerous in another trial, has long left this country as a soldier and is probably dead, so that his appearance to deny any thing is not to be thought of."

Ostertoun, who had in some degree been made

aware of the danger on this head, enquired of Frankover if nothing could be withdrawn in the meantime; to which he immediately replied that it was not easy to have this done, though he had sometimes thought of attempting it; and now more than ever, to prevent any accident, when the last occasion for its use seemed to have passed over; but he feared the watchful eye of the late Mr. Oliphant's agent, especially as he had made some enquiries of Adamson, and did not seem entirely satisfied, yet was forced to suspend investigation by being unable to trace one of the parties.

"Conscience does indeed make cowards of us all," and her avenging lash is plied with unrelenting severity. "*Sontes Tisiphone quatit insultans.*" She permits to them no rest, now clouding their existence with memories of things they would give the world to forget, and now suggesting remedy after remedy to guard against discovery. A thousand precautions are turned over, and one or other seems effectual

against surprise for the moment; and yet in a little, more still remains to be done, and the choice of a new remedy is opposed by new dangers that would arise from its adoption.

Thus the two were tossed about on the waves of a guilty conscience, holding on by any fragment which could prolong their existence, fearful of every one, even fearing one another, as a black array of suspicions for ever crowds upon such minds. Cowardice is cruel; and extreme fear, if once it has the dreaded object in possession, forgets humanity.

Both Ostertoun and Frankover at length seemed to arrive at the same conclusion, that if they could remove young Oliphant, no one interested would remain to disturb their present agreeable position, for it could only be in consequence of claiming the estate that any one would reproduce the troublesome and dangerous questions which had occupied the Courts of law. Towards his apprehension and quiet removal out of the way, both resolved that neither

time nor expense was to be considered in bringing him within their grasp. What should be done with him both tacitly refrained from discussing, perhaps remembering the proverb, and also that it was needless to run prospectively into more guilt, even in each other's eyes, than was absolutely necessary; both were men of the world, and had seen a vast number of all ranks, in every possible situation, and marked their course of conduct. They well knew, therefore, the use of a specious outward appearance, and the propriety of saying no more than was necessary and required by the occasion. Frankover, after this long consultation, though to neither did the time appear protracted, took leave of Mr. Ostertoun with many expressions of confidence that all would be right. He said he would endeavour to obtain possession of the writing, but Ostertoun found himself more free to consider the subject, and suggested that even this, if observed would but increase the suspicion that already existed in the minds of the late Mr. Oliphant's advisers.

"You are too anxious, by G—d, Mr. Frankover," said Ostertoun, who was safe from any blame of participation in what made Mr. Frankover so uncertain and vacillating, contrary to the usual decision of his character; "your fears disorder the usual clearness of your judgment."

"Such fears might disorder yours, too, Mr. Ostertoun, if you had the same personal interest in the matter."

"Come," answered he, "we must meet this affair coolly, by George, and, if we can keep the youngster out of the reach of evil counsellors, we shall have no trouble by a subordinate thing such as gives you uneasiness at present. Let us turn all our care to secure him; and to do you bare justice, Mr. Frankover, I know no man who is more diligent, energetic, or more successful in action than yourself."

The praise of the wealthy Nabob, so well qualified to judge of the merits of any man of the world, who had himself gained a reputation

in India for the same qualities, was pleasing to Mr. Frankover, especially because it contained a compliment to his professional skill, as he had had some difficulty in establishing himself in Mr. Ostertoun's confidence against another competitor— a result which was in no small degree aided by Mr. Frankover's judicious disclosure of the danger to be apprehended from the very matter to which their attention had in the close of the conversation been directed. Thus mutually satisfied they parted, and Frankover, on going out, felt to his surprise the cold breeze of very early morning, and that if he meant to be engaged in the pursuit of the fugitive he could only have an hour or two to rest. He was in want of repose, for the business of the preceding hours had excited his mind greatly; but so resolute a man as he was, soon throws off the weight of both care and fatigue, and he felt assured he should be adequate for any call that might be made on him.

CHAPTER V.

MR. FRANKOVER, after snatching a short repose, was again on foot at an hour when too many other men are losing the cheering influences of morning, on luxurious couches. He remembered another gentleman greatly interested as well as Mr. Ostertoun, Mr. Marks, of Markshill, who was then in Edinburgh, but having more dependence on his influence with Mr Ostertoun, he at first hesitated about seeing the other, who, well satisfied with the result of the law-suit, was not aware of the importance of the evidence which had been referred to in the conversations of Frankover, Adamson, and Ostertoun.

Mr. Frankover came to Mr. Marks' house, as he was about to sit down to breakfast, and was received by him with much regard. A few words of Frankover's explained what had happened; but Mr. Marks was a man of straightforward, honorable mind, nor ever suspected any unfair advantage in the law-suit, nor saw any necessity for watching or concealing anything afterwards. He wished no enquiries to be made nor precautions to be taken, but if Mr. Frankover, or Mr. Ostertoun thought otherwise, he made them welcome to take such steps as they might consider necessary for their own satisfaction.

"Have we not gained our case?" said Mr. Marks; "enmity, Mr. Frankover, I have buried with poor Oliphant in the grave, and his son I would wish to assist. Heaven, which sees all our motives as well as actions, may judge my conduct towards the father too much regulated by self interest. Should I not rather wish to wipe away that stain. I swear to you that when

I think how that dreadful suit has aroused some of the worst passions of our nature, I am forced to wish I had never been engaged in it to my pecuniary loss, that so I might have escaped their searing influence. It seems as if my nature had undergone some change under its cursed influence. Find young Oliphant by all means, and bring him to me, and, by heaven I will expend my share of his father's land in forwarding his views in any way that appears most likely to do him good."

What could Mr. Frankover do with so wrong headed a man as Mr. Marks? He nearly told him he was a fool; then thought of his great reputation for probity and honour, restrained himself and took a ceremonious leave. Mr. Marks at parting called to him,

"Now bring him here, and I shall be a father to him."

Mr. Frankover next repaired to the house where he made his counsel and solicitor acquainted with the sudden disappearance of young Oli-

phant, and expressed so much anxiety to find him, that they began at last to have some vague suspicions of his disinterestedness in taking charge of the heir of his late antagonist; and after he had left, Mr. Oldenlaw, who had pleaded Frankover's case, remarked, that the young gentleman seemed to have well-founded scruples in trusting himself to the care of Frankover, and animadverted upon the neglect of young Oliphant's relations.

"But," said he to the agent of Frankover, "all this is foreign to your and my occupation, which is to conduct the cases entrusted to us, in the best manner in our power upon the evidence, to which no tangible objection is raised by the enemy. It was their duty to discover and bring it before the court; if there is surprise, or concealment, or falsehood, it will be detected sometime or other, to the confusion of those who have practised it. And to tell you the truth, Mr. Oswald," he continued, "I think there is an unusual nervousness about this Mr. Frankover,

after to all appearance the thing has gone as he could desire. What jealousy should he entertain of the poor lad whose father he has helped prematurely to his grave. But *odimus quem læsimus;* I am glad the boy is off, and if I have an opportunity shall certainly warn his relations to keep him safe from Frankover; but you know when there is no estate to be taken care of there is not much care given to the person."

Mr. Oswald could not but admit that this was all agreeable to his experience. The conversation here terminated, and if it could have been heard by the person to whom it related would have caused him still more uneasiness.

He felt that the whole morning had been spent in disagreeable and vain discussion. As he had resolved to assist by his personal exertions and enquiries the search of his coadjutor Adamson, he procured a gig and left Edinburgh taking the road westward.

To Adamson was entrusted the other roads leading from the city, in the direction of young Oliphant's home, which he could easily by cross roads succeed in going over in the course of a long summer day.

CHAPTER VI.

When Charles Oliphant got clear of the city, on the evening on which he fled, he found himself on a spacious road, and travelled along without any other motive in the first instance, than a desire to remove himself as far as possible out of the reach of the man he dreaded. One by one travellers melted away, till he found himself alone and solitary; pressing along that road, which winds like a great river, over which passes the traffic of the north. A coach now and then paseed, hurrying to town; and at times the challenge of the house dog was heard from some farm near the road.

It was dark and began to rain, while the wind, too, increasing, as the night deepened, threw a doubly solemn gloom over the scene. Once or twice he came to houses on the road side, but the inmates were retired to rest, and enquiry was impossible. He passed the ancient bridge at Cramond, and heard the sound of the waters rising and falling on the fitful blast—then ascended the road as the morning began to glimmer forth from the east. Presently trees, walls, fields, assumed a definite appearance, and in the grey of the morning he entered Queensferry, and found himself on the banks of the Firth, which was in wild commotion under the influence of the storm.

All were at rest in the town, but a stray boatman, who, wrapped in his huge dreadnought, was eyeing the waters, and apparently waiting for comrades to assist him in getting ready for the passage. A few boats rocked on the waves along-side the pier, crowded together as if they had sought shelter from the troubled main, which

was throwing its huge billows, white with foam, on the islets and coast; and the sea bird's scream was heard as he circled or dipped for his prey.

The boy approached the seaman, and learned from him, to his consternation, that he had taken the wrong road, and was far away from that which led to the west. The seaman viewed him with some suspicion at first, but soon discovering that he had wandered so far, from youth and ignorance, kindly showed him how he might, without retracing his steps, cross the country and gain the road to Glasgow. He thanked the seaman, and soon got away from the little town, determined to make up by exertion, for the error into which his fears had led him.

He had only proceeded a mile or two when he came up with a traveller in the same direction. The storm was abated, and a bright sunshine began to enliven the face of nature. The traveller, whom he thus overtook, proved to be the schoolmaster of a neighbouring village, about to revisit his native place, near Glasgow, who entered

into conversation at once with one so young; and on learning his strange wandering of the preceding night, volunteered to bring him out of his perplexity and set him in the right way. And not content with this, when he found his young companion had not tasted food nor rested the whole night, he took care to supply his wants at the first inn they came to on the road, and allowed him a short time for repose.

On resuming their journey they were joined almost immediately by another traveller, about to proceed, as he said, in the same direction, who, without the formality of asking leave, made himself their companion, and notwithstanding some hints of a broad enough nature, persisted in keeping along side of them. Whether they went fast or slow, was all the same to him, his step suited theirs exactly, and also his time. A strong man he was, not particularly well-dressed, with a heavy oaken cudgel in his hand, full of jokes, not a few of which were directed against the dispensations of providence

in this world, which, without any fault of its creatures, doomed some to poverty and toil, and blessed others with riches and honours.

"Why," said he, "should that man, whom we now see leave his fine mansion, in that well-wooded park, seated in his coach, flourish in gross luxury and ease, knowing not one of those troubles which afflict so many of his fellow creatures; while we are compelled to toil from morning to night, and barely contrive to prolong our lives by continual labour."

The Schoolmaster, to whom such doctrines sounded new and extravagant, immediately replied, that providence was nowise answerable for such inequalities, which were the result of the institutions of society.

"Nor," said he, "are we always to assume that every man elevated by rank or wealth above the necessity of labour, is therefore always happier than the man who has not his apparent advantages. A man may be happy and comfortable in any station."

"You are, then, one of those," replied the other, "who would patiently submit to every misfortune though not brought on by yourself, contented with the hard condition in which you have been born."

"We must all learn to submit to what cannot be remedied without violence and in truth," said the Dominie, "the poor may, in some respects, be considered happier than the rich. They have no anxiety about possessions of land or money—no bankrupt debtors, no struggle for honours, no dread of loss of rank—they are saved a thousand cares, wishes, and aspirations that rob the rich and powerful of rest. Thus they have more time to meditate upon those promises of heaven to be realised hereafter."

"So you would prefer," said the other, "to have nothing in your pocket to being possessed of what may now be in it."

"No," said the Dominie, "I did not assert it was necessary to part with what I have to ensure happiness, but merely maintained that each man

may obtain it in the situation in which providence has placed him."

"But you may have at present," said the stranger, "as much money as relieves you from any fear of want, and enables you to talk with so much coolness."

"I am not without money, and have enough at present to meet any demand I am likely to encounter."

"I shall consider," said the stranger, "at some time hereafter, those views about the happiness of poverty which you entertain me with; to me they are something new."

"There is nothing new about them: *Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator.*"

At this point of the dialogue they had reached a place well overhung with trees, around whose trunks grew a thick brushwood, when the stranger raising his heavy stick discharged it with such force on the Dominie's head as instantly to level him with the earth. His pockets were examined and emptied in a trice, while

young Oliphant, aghast at the suddenness of the action, could hardly articulate an exclamation of horror.

"Tell your friend, my boy, when he is able to hear you, he will now have it in his power to enjoy the pleasures of poverty; and as I have tasted them for some time, I cheerfully exchange lots with him. Good bye, my boy; but if you ever see me again look as if you never saw me, unless you wish to lie where your friend is at present stretched."

So saying he passed through the hedge and was lost among the bushes.

In a little time the gentleman whose carriage and rank had originated the discussion on the comparative advantages of poverty and riches, drove along the road, where the unfortunate schoolmaster was lying with young Oliphant standing beside him. He was one of those country justices who are much more anxious to detect and punish a criminal than to assist the unfortunate. Pompous and conceited, he or-

dered his carriage to be stopped, alighted with an air of importance, and proceeded to inquire into the cause of the violence. He interrogated the youth, whose answers somewhat incoherent, joined with his situation, at first raised suspicion in the mind of the worthy gentleman. But this having been removed by a consideration of his age, and the person who had been injured and robbed appearing of an humble condition, he re-entered his chariot and drove off, promising to send the Fiscal to make an inquisition. The youth thus left to himself in so trying a moment, proceeded to stanch the blood flowing from the wound in the schoolmaster's head with his handkerchief, and finding some water in the next ditch, sprinkled a little on his face, and he gradually recovered his senses and opened his eyes. But he was unable to speak, and in this situation they were found by the same gentleman's farm servant, who was driving a cart along the road. He, more humane than his master, with infinite difficulty and the little help Charles Oliphant

could give, contrived to raise the wounded man and deposit him in it, and brought him to the nearest house, an humble labourer's by the way side, whose wife received him and had him put to bed.

The justice lost no time in proving his zeal for the detection and conviction of all offenders against the law. His report of an alarming robbery, perhaps murder, made all the inhabitants of the town, where the Fiscal lived, tremble; and as he took care to magnify his own exertions for the apprehension of the delinquent, who had, unfortunately, for the time eluded him, his previous reputation was mightily increased in the eyes of the citizens, and in due time sounded forth in the columns of the county newspapers.

The Procurator Fiscal, as he is called, who had the eye and scent of a raven for blood, flew off to the spot where the crime was perpetrated. An officer he is, who does that with infinite parade which would be generally as efficiently

and much less expensively done by a policeman, of which profession he is truly a member, with a more honorable, and at least a more sounding name. But names and offices are preserved in our order-loving land for the good they produce to the fortunate holder, and not for the benefit his exertions confer on the public.

He arrived with a surgeon and assistants, and was as usual much more solicitous in enquiring into the particulars of the crime than concerned about the life of the schoolmaster. The surgeon, who was also acting for the good of the public, dressed the wound, and said a few weeks would, with his skill and attention, restore the teacher to his school. One or two constables were sent on the fruitless errand of finding the offender; declarations were taken; the schoolmaster fell into a second trance; and the Fiscal departed to record a charge for his valuable time against his country, and to report the case, as he termed it, to the crown lawyers at Edinburgh, who were saved a continuation of the dreary drama of

prosecuting criminals, by the little fact that there was no criminal found to be prosecuted or convicted.

Much too small a personage was poor Charles Oliphant to have received any attention from the important Fiscal.

"Let him go, Tom," said one of his police assistants, and he was allowed to set forward on his journey.

Throughout the afternoon he travelled on, and by enquiries found towards evening he had nearly reached the road to Glasgow. The journey and want of food had exhausted his strength, and he was considering if he should not lie down in the nearest field in despair, when the sound of wheels, slowly and firmly crushing the metal of a road which entered on that on which he was travelling, attracted his attention. Onwards it came, heavily laden, its load well tied down, and by its side walked the powerful driver, and between the wheels trotted, and glared, and barked, his savage bull-dog, which had already noticed the boy.

Thus attracted, when the carrier came up he stopped his cart, and as he looked at the worn lad before him, began to feel compassion for one so young.

He enquired where he was going, and received only an evasive answer.

"Weel, weel, lad, keep your secret; but ye're tired," said M'Causland, "for your shanks shake under you. Come, I'se gie ye a ride a bit. Yet, my word, ye may fa' off, yere sae tired like, unless I fix you on."

The boy affected to decline the intended favor, while absolutely worn out with fatigue, hunger, and want of sleep. But the carrier, who had from experience some idea of his condition, said:

"Na, na, ye'll no decline, as ye ca't, else I see ye may lie on the road side. Get up, get up, I'll fasten ye on."

So saying, he assisted the boy to the top of his cart, where he placed him in a secure position, and threw an old rug over him.

"Let me know, however, when you reach the Glasgow road, for then I want to get down."

"Yes, yes, my puir bairn."

The carrier descended and drove on, while his *protégé* in his now easy situation looked into the blue vault of heaven, with its shining hosts, and his ears only heard the monotonous sound of the slow moving wheels. Fatigue and want of sleep sunk him to rest, and when the carrier reached the Glasgow road and stopped to communicate the fact, he could not succeed in obtaining any but inarticulate sounds from the sleeper. He was perplexed and undecided, for no house was near, and his natural feelings revolted at the idea of leaving him friendless and alone.

"I canna do it," he muttered; "rest on, then, for surely you're safer on my cart than on the road, and can get some conveyance to-morrow."

On, therefore, they went, save when M'Causland stopped to leave some parcel by the way or to feed his horse, or refresh himself at the public

houses, where he was welcome from his social turn, kept in check and within proper limits by a feeling of responsibility for the trust reposed in him.

After proceeding thus some hours, the slumberer only awakened to a consciousness of his situation when he found the lights from the street lamps of Edinburgh shining in his eyes as they drove up the Grass Market.

"Where am I?" thought he; "is this Glasgow?"

The belief that he had come so far was at first consoling, but the delusion was soon dissipated by the cart stopping at the very inn from which he had fled the evening before. There was the landlord ready to receive him; there was the crowd of loiterers about the door,—porters waiting to be employed, labourers about to retire for the night, pale artizans staggering under the excitement of the liquor in which they had drowned their cares, their toil and ill-health for the moment; female wanderers, prepared to

pick stragglers up,—all the tumult and misery of a crowded town.

Now fully awake, Oliphant slipped cautiously down to the wheel, and reached the ground unobserved by M'Causland, who had gone to the inn door, growled at by his dog. To mingle with the crowd and escape into the churchyard seemed easy, and he succeeded without observation. M'Causland almost immediately returned, and climbing up, found to his astonishment the bird had flown.

"Landlord," cried he, "I brought a boy with me whom I met done up, and meant him a nicht's rest, but he's gaen."

"A boy!" said the innkeeper, whose attention was excited; "what was he like?"

On hearing the description he cried out,—

"The very lad; here Jock, Policeman, search for him."

"Why, what's a' this?" said M'Causland; "is he a murderer or thief?"

"No, no, but we must have him if possible."

A diligent search was commenced among the crowd in the streets and closes by the innkeeper and his servants, but without success, who thought not of the boy going into the churchyard; and he had made his way in the meantime through the same outlet by which he had gone the night before, and fear lending him vigour, he was soon at a distance from any of them about the inn.

At length the landlord, blowing with toil and rage, said,

"My word, M'Causland, you brought a prize, for weel I had been paid for catching him, and a' lost."

"And gif you meant the lad harm, I'm glad he's off, for nane should have laid hands on him, if I helped without jalousing to bring him into danger."

The landlord's wife felt disposed to blame her helpmate; he fell upon the servants, while M'Causland, after listening a little, exclaimed:

"Now heaven be thanked I was not made

a trap without my knowing to catch a puir harmless creatur like this. Leave off your tuibzieing. My cart must be unloaded, else there are folk walking about here that would leave me little trouble in that way verra sune."

These were the words of one not to be slighted in his humble line; he knew it and the landlord knew it too, so farther enquiry was stopped, and the business of the Ram's Horns went on in the usual way; M'Causland soon forgot all about his passenger, and the landlord about his young and runaway guest; all became again immersed in the cares that come most pressingly of the black array that rise with each succeeding sun, and are met with resolution or with sorrow, till despatched to oblivion by the friendly charm of sleep.

With early dawn, as he had promised to Frankover, Mr. Nicol Adamson was on foot, and all day had prosecuted his enquiries on the south roads, along which it seemed most probable the fugitive would be found going homewards. No

one, however, could be heard of, to whom Adamson's description of him applied. Despairing at length of success in that direction, he crossed the Pentlands to meet his employer at the village of Currie. Mr. Frankover had arrived, and having been unsuccessful in his aim was waiting the result of his emissary's enquiries. When he arrived, Frankover saw from his downcast countenance he had been unsuccessful.

"Ah! Adamson," he said, "we have missed him but must not despair."

"No, no," said Adamson, "I am not much liable to that."

Long and anxious were the deliberations of the two as to the course which the boy had taken, but nothing at that late hour seemed probable in the way of discovery. Adamson resolved to take the Queensferry road next day; "for," said he "the lad may have wished to throw us out at first, and has succeeded so far; but I know all in that direction so well that there is no doubt we must find him, unless he is gone to the bottom of the Firth."

To find that conclusion of the search his employer would have had no objection, but in the meantime they got into Frankover's vehicle and drove towards Edinburgh, which they reached shortly after M'Causland.

Next morning Frankover went to the Ram's Horns, in case by chance any trace of Oliphant had been found there, and was astonished with the information that the fugitive had returned in his absence, and again disappeared. Adamson was sent for and the search was resumed, in which they thought there could now be no failure.

When the boy escaped the second time he took the west road, and had not gone far till it occurred to him that a pursuit would be made by Frankover, as soon as he should have learned of his second appearance and escape, and obtained from M'Causland the information that he met him in search of the road to Glasgow. But he knew he had the night before him; fences, streams, corn fields, and ploughed lands he could

see dimly by the moonlight, with the solitary and quiet farm-steadings as he hurried on; and the loneliness, which at other times would have been a terror, was now felt as a security. No human being met him in his toilsome and anxious progress; but as the waning moon and stars began to fade before the rising sun, he was sensible again of the lapse of time, the approach of another morning; and oh! how different. All was sweet, pure, silent and calm, such as sometimes ushers in the Sunday in a far off and world-separated glen. He marked the first faint flutter and chirp of the birds in the hedges, the earliest bee settling on the flower, the first caw of the rook as it rose in the air above the trees where it had roosted, the first breeze of morning breathed from the nostrils of his steeds as the God of Day clamb the eastern steep, and looked over the mountains. Sleep still held in his silken fetters the humble inhabitants of the houses he passed, and still the cattle seemed to rest in the fields.

But his step had become unsteady from severe and protracted exertion, which could only have been sustained so long by the energy which fear had instilled into his heart; he could go no further, even if the person he most dreaded were seen in pursuit, but left the high road and lay down in a field of growing corn, where he thought he was safe from detection, muttered a prayer for protection, and soon was beyond every care in a profound repose. Here hours passed away unperceived by him; every fear was vanquished by toil and unwonted excitement; the waving corn with its myriads of rustling heads sheltered him from the sun and wind, and from the observation of man.

He might have slept on till the stars had been again set in the heavens before awaking to a consciousness of his situation, but a child going to fetch a pail of water from a well near the field was accompanied by her dog, which attracted by that acute instinct that enables the animal to discover what man cannot, found him out as he

lay asleep and by its gambols aroused him. He started up and caressed the animal, which began to bound about him, and seemed, by taking short circles, leaving him and then returning, to invite him to follow.

The child after calling on her favorite in vain, set down her pail, and going towards him was surprised at the appearance of Oliphant, who now advanced to her, caressing the dog which performed the ceremony of introduction with so much cordiality, that he seemed resolved they should be friends. They smiled at each other, and then at the dog, who was testifying his satisfaction by coursing around, barking and rolling himself on the grass before them. A fine specimen of the Newfoundland breed he was, kind and sagacious, his little mistress was sure of his protection, and she was pleased with the stranger, because Hector was pleased. Oliphant told her that he had been fatigued, and had fallen asleep, and was going to Glasgow.

"Glasgow," said she, "is far from this, and

you are off the road, but come with me to my grandmother and tell her, and she will be kind to you, and put you on the way. But first, I must fill my pitcher." He said, "I will fill it for you;" and though weak he would exert himself for his little Rebecca, and took the water from the well. He would have carried it too, but she discerned his weakness, and said she would do it herself. "Look," she said, "at my little trout caught yesterday by Sandie, our man, in the burn, which he brought me, and put in the well. See how he hides himself under the stone. I will not allow him to be killed, and the well is too cold. I must have him back to live as he pleases in the burn, if I can catch him." Oliphant admired him as he was bound to do, and promised to help to carry him back to his warmer stream.

"Well, come away," said little Mary, "or I shall be blamed for idleness coming from the well, and grandmother does not like the idle. She tells me always to be busy, but she is not

hard upon any one—they just do what she desires. I dare not offend her."

Oliphant hastened to assure her he would explain the cause of her delay, and thus conversing, the pair, preceded by little Mary's Hector, walked on to Mrs. Morton's house. It was a plain dwelling-house, situated amidst a few acres of well cultivated ground; a garden stocked with fruit trees, was bounded by the stream of the Ward, fretting away in puny agitation, amongst the rock and large pebbles in its bed The furniture of the house was scrupulously clean, though very old fashioned, and the whole side walls of the house were lined with wood, as is frequently seen in the habitations of the better classes, which date back for two hundred years, in which warmth and comfort are more considered than internal decorations, from a just dread of our cold and humid climate.

Mrs. Morton, who never saw her little grandchild stay so long, was standing at the door, and

called her once or twice by name. Mary heard her voice. "Off, sir," she cried, addressing Hector, "and tell her we're coming." He seemed to know what she desired, and bounded down the avenue to the old lady, who was immediately relieved by the sight of him, and scarcely allowing her time to chide him was off again, more pleased to be the companion of cheerful youth, than of thoughtful and severe age.

The appearance of her Mary, with a youthful stranger, surprised Mrs. Morton, but she was too kind to put any questions, after learning from Mary, in a whisper, that he was friendless, and had wandered from the road. In a little while she sat before him that refreshment he so much needed. She saw that her grandchild's humanity had been bestowed at the right time; and she hoped, from the gentle appearance of the stranger, upon a right object.

CHAPTER VII.

ALL day had Adamson again prosecuted his enquiries with equal zeal, and with no better success than on the former occasion. His disposition was apt to become somewhat testy if he failed in his object; and with persons of that character it is not unusual to overrate both their services and their importance. "Why," thought he, "should I be obliged to undergo this drudgery, while Frankover, no wise better than myself, has emerged from it into comfortable employment and society;" and disappointment and conceit, holding sway for the time, he was disposed to execrate both the business and the man

who employed him, had he not now and then been recalled to a more worldly way of thinking, by the reflection, that his payment was not dependant on success, but on the time he was engaged, though success might produce an extra remuneration.

It is very certain, that Adamson could not have been Frankover, nor achieved equal rank, though fortune had put him in the high road and carried him a stage on the way. Any impediment would have diverted, or retarded, or discouraged him. And this inability of any man is neither to be blamed by the friend who helped him, nor lamented by the many Adamsons to be found in society, or what is worse denied by themselves to exist, when to all the world it is transparent. It is to be acknowledged and submitted to, as part of the dispensations of providence, which provides every one with a different talent, and some with several; and leaves to the judgment of each to put it out, so as to secure a just return. But the vanity of individuals, the

pride of parents, the customs of society, are continually perverting the judgment: and it is often long, and after many disappointments, that a man finds his talent has been laid out unprofitably, and would roll back time, if he could, to begin the world anew, with half a life-time of experience.

What hearts are sunk and withered, by the senseless practice of educating all the middle and upper, and many of the humble classes, too, in the same way; till the country is inundated with men not accustomed to work, but to professions and pursuits, where moderate talent, or even laborious industry, from the excess of labourers, can be put to no profit.

But this is digressing, like Adamson himself. Towards evening, he came to a small inn on the road side, and resolved to remain there for the night. He set a watch to prevent Frankover passing the place, and after supper consoled himself with a glass of ale before retiring for the night.

There chanced to be at the inn several countrymen; and as there was but little space for separate guests, all had for the time been accommodated in the same room, where, on long fir tables, the glass was circulating freely, and with the usual effect of making the guests talkative, or sentimental, or disputatious and quarrelsome. To the messenger's consternation, he soon discovered among them one who bore him a grudge, for proceedings he had been the means of executing against him, by which he was despoiled of his effects, and his family ejected from their home at an inclement season.

The law in its operations pays no regard to seasons or conveniences, and is a stranger to conventional proprieties. It is hard as granite, angular as a bayonet, sharp as its point, and in motion as measured as a steam-engine. To abstain from the use of it may often be the most provident course, for it is a weapon dangerous even to its possesser when discharged; its effect being then no more subject to modification than a bomb-shell when its bursts.

Unfortunately the ocuntryman was not inclined to make, even if he was capable, any distinction between the agent and the instrument; and it never occurred to him that if he had paid his debt he should have saved his family from ejection, and his effects from being seized in satisfaction. Under the influence of the ale he had been drinking and of the memory of the sufferings he had undergone, his passions were roused the moment he knew his man. "Ha! Mr. Adamson," said he, after some silence, during which he had communicated in a whisper, the profession of Adamson to his friends at the table, "I think we have foregathered before now." He who was thus addressed had his reasons for not recollecting anything of that occasion, and affected not to observe the familiar sneer which accompanied the recognition, but stared at him as if he had not seen him before. "Come, come," said the countryman, "this will never do. Not mind me, not mind Thankerford farm and your poinding of my effects and my wife and children turned out?

And you do remember them." Adamson thus forced in so pointed a manner to task his memory said, he had been engaged in so much business he could not recollect all the faces and circumstances he encountered in the performance of his duty. "Duty!" said the other, "A pretty duty, truly! My wife and children might have perished, but for the kindness of my neibour Lyall here; but I swore I wad be upsides with you some day or some nicht for it, and you have come on purpose I think to get a taste of the same kind of thing you can oblige another to drink." He was rising from his seat, as he uttered these words, heated with the liquor he had swallowed, and quite determined to use the chance that had been given him. Several of the others who, now that they understood Adamson's profession and the way in which it had been exercised, were inclined to assist the man, rose also. Notwithstanding his warnings, remonstrances, and entreaties, they laid hold of Adamson; but he did not submit without resistance, during

which the tables and glasses were overturned and broken; and the house was put into the last state of disturbance, before they could have him dragged into the open air. Once got out, however, more hands were brought to bear, and he was carried to a pool near the house and tumbled in. Though all of the men did not participate in the deed, none of them made an effort to stop the violence, and, indeed, perhaps they knew it would be vain and even dangerous to themselves; but yet knowing so cruel and lawless an action required them to sympathise with and even defend Adamson.

The ducking of the messenger, and his cries of murder afforded his assailants only materials for their savage mirth, which was loud, boisterous, and only brought to an end on his being dragged from the water insensible. Life might have been taken, their consciences whispered, as they saw the body extended motionless, bare-headed on the bank; and they knew that some of them in that case must answer with their own

lives for the deed. Instead of assisting to restore animation, the whole of them now turned away and decamped, as fast as possible, from the scene of violence, trusting that as it was nearly dark, and many concerned, and great confusion, there would be difficulty in recognising individuals.

After a long time, and the application of some remedies, but chiefly the fresh air breathing upon his face, Adamson opened his eyes, and gazed about him, quite unconscious for the moment of all that had occurred. The landlord, with some assistance, had him conveyed to the inn, where he was put to bed, and the surgeon of the village was sent for, who found him so ill that it required his constant attendance to save his life.

Frankover arrived shortly after, and was astonished at what had taken place; he gave such directions as were necessary for Adamson's comfort and recovery, and departed with a determination to have the perpetrators of the outrage apprehended and punished. This incident, in some degree, diverted his attention from the matter on which they had been engaged, in which

he plainly enough discovered they had both been equally unsuccessful.

But if he had waited a short time longer at the inn, he must have discovered Oliphant's retreat, as a servant of Mrs. Morton, coming in accidentally, two or three minutes after he left, mentioned that a stray lad had turned up that day in the field, and was then at her house. The messenger, too, must have discovered the same thing, if he had not been put beyond the power of hearing or understanding, by the ill-usage to which he had been subjected.

Frankover was not slow in representing that if such outrages were frequent, justice would be stopped, as none would be found to run the risks of the duty for the trifling remuneration allowed, and the debtor or the criminal would never be secured. His remonstrances were not ineffectual to obtain enquiry; but were useless for detection, although it is for the general interest and welfare to repress such violence done to society collectively and individually; and

therefore, the remark naturally comes to be made that our lecturers on virtue and morality, instead of vague and frigid declamations on their beauty, should address their uneducated hearers upon their duties as citizens in preserving order, and assisting those to whom that work is entrusted. We should then hear less of resistance to military or police, and find men instead of assisting to revenge an injury on such as Adamson, engaged in affording him protection.

CHAPTER VIII.

MRS. MORTON was left with two children, her husband having died early. Her son had entered the East India Company's service, and died when about to visit his native country, whither he had sent his wife and daughter. His wife did not long survive; and little Mary Morton became the darling of her grandmother, who delighted to mark in her opening bloom the resemblance of her father. Mrs. Morton's daughter had married Mr. Elphinstone, of Edinburgh.

Mary's father had not realised a large fortune, but still left enough to make a comfortable provision for his child; and she was fortunate

in being brought up by her grandmother, whose family had been accustomed to associate with the gentry of the neighbourhood. The superior manners and conversation of the better class, were thus acquired by the family; and Mrs. Morton remained agreeable, in spite of the usual effects of age, in rendering both temper and manners too austere, for the lively and untried disposition of youth.

Her husband had left her a considerable fortune, with the house and grounds, affording all the comforts which her station required; and living in such easy circumstances her natural benevolence was at once interested by the tale of Charles Oliphant Though his father had resided in a distant part of the country, she knew his family was ancient, a species of knowledge much cultivated in Scotland. She participated in some degree in his fears of Mr. Frankover, and sent for her son-in-law, who being in the legal profession, soon assured her that that gentleman had no power without authority of a court,

or of the young gentleman's relatives, to take possession of his person.

Mr. Elphinstone put himself in communication with Mr. Frankover, and thought it right to let him know where Oliphant was. At first he affected to take high ground in confidence of support from those who had shown so much indifference at the father's funeral, but they hesitated on being pressed to consent to his appointment as guardian, and ultimately declined. There was no property to be managed by any guardian; and there appeared something mysterious in Frankover's desire for the appointment, which could bring him no profits. They stood aloof; and Frankover finding himself thus unsupported, where he seemed sure of countenance, withdrew in the meantime from a dispute with Mr. Elphinstone.

To Elphinstone, what appeared to promise a victory was always a sufficient reason not to decline a contest, and if his zeal had been slack in the affair, his mother-in-law would have prevented him from yielding,

"Who knows," said Mrs. Morton, "if matters are so bad, that no remnant exists of the large estate that was his ancestors."

This consideration operated on Mr. Elphinstone, who ever looked to the distant and future, and neglected the present. He had from that peculiar turn of mind, involved himself in a multiplicity of difficult affairs which promised something great at a future time, but involved nothing except pecuniary obligation for the present.

The bright and sunny side of human life, always seemed to turn up to him, for when the dark and gloomy came round he would not see it, but resorted to some temporary expedient to avoid it, or helped by some device to wheel it away. This peculiarity made him not only a charming companion, and agreeable man of business, but fixed him beyond risk of change in the affections of Mrs. Morton.

She too had the same happy turn of disposition.

"We shall," she said, "keep the boy and put

him to school; perhaps fortune may yet smile on him, and he may be able to recompense us; if not, we shall have done a kind and charitable action to one who is friendless."

Acting on these views which she communicated to Oliphant, who was but too happy to be relieved from wandering he scarce knew whither, and from the dread of Frankover, she retained him a happy inmate of her house; and he soon forgot in the society of Mary Morton, and of the boys of the little village adjacent, the troubles and anxieties to which he had been subjected.

CHAPTER IX.

THE disastrous conclusion of the question in which the late Mr. Oliphant had been involved, and in which he was so unsuccessful, brought to sale the sole remaining part of his family's ancient inheritance, including the Mansion house. There was none now to dispute the necessity or propriety of what was done, and Mr. Frankover, who had determined, if possible, to purchase what remained, was successful in that also. He and several others, Mr. Ostertoun, and Mr. Marks, got the bulk of the estate, and it seemed only natural that the Mansion House should

receive the owner of a considerable part of the lands.

A course of professional success furnished him with the means of making this purchase; if he doubted about the propriety of it, in a pecuniary view, ambition whispered to him that his standing in society would be raised by such an acquisition.

He now assumed the importance of a country gentleman of fortune and condition, and seemed to rise above those parts of his profession by which he had at first achieved wealth, desirous to stake his claims to respect on his fortune, address, and intelligence.

It requires tact and prudence for a new man to wear his early honours without offending the pride of those who have only been accustomed to regard him as an inferior. Envy or malice is at work in the minds and mouths of many against the person who thus dares to surpass his former equals; but Frankover was well qualified to meet and overcome envy or prejudice.

With an excellent education, he had been an attentive observer of the characters of the gentlemen who employed him professionally. In their presence he seemed to sink the pretensions which his large property entitled him to put forward, and still was the dependent and adviser, though with all others he ostentatiously presumed upon his condition, but still not offensively; his natural tact and discretion rendering him safe from that vulgar error.

Each month brought him into more frequent intercourse with men of a higher class upon a footing of equality as regarded the matters discussed between them, and enabled him gradually to assume the position to which he aspired.

Besides the last portion of the family estate, Mr. Oliphant's personal effects came to be disposed of for his creditors. Mr. Frankover attended the sale, resolved to buy almost the whole, and to exceed all competitors in the prices he offered. He knew the value of presenting to the eyes of visitors the interior economy of his house exactly

as it appeared in the time of the former family, and with this view determined to retain the furniture in the house.

Miss Waldie was present at the sale, more out of curiosity than from any intention of purchasing. She endeavoured to obtain the attendance of her brother the Laird also; but he was much too busy with his farm to submit to the loss of time, and too penurious to expend money upon articles not essential.

"What hae we to do wi' the great or their gew-gaws? Nothing that he had wad suit my plain house."

Mentally his sister agreed with him, but from curiosity would attend the sale, to which a number of all classes of the neighbours around had collected.

The rooms were crowded with those who expected to pick up articles of elegant furniture to set off their plain dwellings; but they soon found as the sale proceeded they had not reckoned on a competitor so wealthy as Frankover, and so determined to attain his object.

Next to the clods of earth striking the coffin of the dead, there is nothing more melancholy than the sharp blow of the auctioneer's hammer knocking down his effects. Among other articles then put up, was a picture of Mr. Oliphant, a fine likeness of him when a young man, and done by a skilful artist. To his family alone could it have been at any time of much consequence to possess it; but when put up Frankover resolved to have it. He could refer to his predecessor at full length on the wall of his dining room, and never supposed that any offer for it would be made. Accordingly he bid for it.

"This picture," said the auctioneer, "is the likeness of the late proprietor of this place. Some may wish to have it for a remembrance of one perhaps known to all present."

Miss Waldie observed well the likeness of the handsome countenance which engaged her fancy in youth, and immediately bid above Frankover, though a blush overspread her face in doing so, but she had none to apply to to undertake the

purchase. Frankover at once doubled on this, and resolved to have it, not expecting the old maid was likely to give him farther trouble. But he was mistaken. She in her turn doubled on him, and the auctioneer well pleased with the competition, now incited the one and now the other.

"Mr. Frankover," he said, "will wish to keep his predecessor's portrait. It is part of the house. Madam," turning to the lady, "this is a good face of Mr. Oliphant's. You may have seen the original some time or other."

The country people grew interested—some of the elderly ladies had a faint recollection of the attachment that had existed—the men around wished the lady to win, simply because she desired to have the picture, and because she was of the gentler sex, which they feel inclined naturally to assist or defend; and at last Mr. Frankover grew ashamed of continuing the competition in the face of the general expression, besides that he could see the lady would not be

disappointed, however disproportionate the value of the article to the price she might have to pay. To the general satisfaction Miss Waldie prevailed and became the purchaser.

"Fules and their money are soon soon parted," said the laird to his sister, when the picture was brought home. "Fifty gowden guineas for a bit of canvass and a daub of paint. Ae Geordie's head's worth fifty sic pictures."

Miss Jenny said nothing in answer, for her brother was incapable of understanding what prompted her to the expence.

"But who bid against ye?"

"Mr. Frankover."

"Indeed," said the laird; "that man's buying everything. I doubt between pictures, and furniture, and land, he'll come to ha'e more on his hand than he can well 'fend. I ha'e na seen in my time any man putting forth his arm sae far. It will be numbed at last unless I'm sair mista'en. Ilka dog has his day."

The lady was not vexed at the expence, and

she was pleased with her victory over one whom she had learned to regard with aversion for his presumption in attempting to cope with the gentry of the country.

She hung the picture up where it would be most in her sight, as she loved to dwell on those parts of her early life when the feelings were fresh and the affections strong, though destined, as, alas! so often is the case in all ranks, to be thwarted, crossed, disappointed, and perverted by the customs of the world, the desire of wealth, the love of distinction, the opposition of relations, and the thousand obstacles that prevent, in our artificial society, the joint action of the truest and best feelings of our nature. This was a subject that Mr. Quivox, though married to science, as a priest of Rome is to his church, thought not unworthy of notice, and he on one occasion treated it even as a matter for legislation to an admiring circle of ladies thus:

"The last act of our legislators," said he on that occasion, "will be directed to devise the

best means of removing these obstacles to domestic happiness, rendering men contented with their present condition, and thereby improving the morality, prosperity, and felicity of the people. Judicious application of the national resources would do much to reduce competition in every rank, to give labour its just reward, and to encourage the young to undertake those duties that heaven has ordained, and which are not violated by nations or individuals with impunity, whether on account of false views of religion, or inordinate ambition, or gloomy poverty."

At their request, he even promised to recur to the subject if more important points would permit.

But Miss Waldie secured and disposed of the picture to her satisfaction. In time it occurred to her to enquire where was the son she had seen but once, and she said mentally, "safe with his father's friends, who thought themselves too great for me."

CHAPTER X.

Mr. Elphinstone was agent for Lord Lyndale, whose house was in the vicinity of Mrs. Morton's, and in these capacities had occasion to adjust a dispute as to boundaries of lands with Mr. Princeton, a neighbouring proprietor. That gentleman, conceiving his noble opponent reckoned too much on his rank and station, was not inclined to give way to such accidents, but maintained his rights with a pertinacity foreign to his usual manner; and, therefore, it required all the good temper and benevolence of Elphinstone to bring matters to an amicable issue. Indeed, it may be safely said that but for his conciliatory

manners, Mr. Princéton would have become more obstinate as the contest wore on, and ultimately the quarrel would have become irreconcilable.

Mr. Princeton called frequently at Mrs. Morton's during the progress of the negociations, and soon attracted the respectful attention of young Mr. Oliphant; and observing the intelligence of the young gentleman to be beyond his years, Mr. Princeton in his turn began to be pleased with his society, though so much his junior.

Princeton was about twenty-eight years of age, and had the usual education of a gentleman, heir to a good estate. His natural parts were superior, and his handsome person, and expressive, manly countenance, were set off by an engaging and unassuming manner, which breathed at once mildness and humility, tempered with courage. His estate was much more than sufficient to save him from the necessity of undertaking the labour of a profession, and in the exercise of the usual occupations and the hos-

pitality of a country gentleman, he lived on terms of friendship with most of the families around, while he was beloved by those of humble condition for the intrinsic goodness of his heart.

He, however, gradually imbibed those ideas in politics which the French Revolution was disseminating over Britain, and was in the habit of expressing his opinion on all political subjects with extreme boldness, and a total disregard of personal consequences. Truth, and not expediency, was asserted by him without hesitation. As the excitement extended from that remarkable event, and penetrated the masses in the large towns of Scotland, producing enquiry and combination, a leader was naturally looked for of rank and property, and Mr. Princeton seemed to furnish the head, men were in search of.

Hence he began gradually to be regarded with suspicion by the Government advisers of the day, but the more ardently on that very account he attended various public meetings, where speeches were made and resolutions adopted, inimical to

existing institutions, and thus became a marked man. The distinction was not flattering to his pride in his native county; for he found coldness where he had previously known friendship amongst the better class, and his peculiar opinions brought him into society which he knew was inferior in wealth and refinement. For this he consoled himself with the reflection that if his views were just and had their foundation in truth, he ought to support them at all personal inconvenience, and ought not to temporise or conceal on account of expediency or from regard to his own fortune and security. The consciousness of being alone, however, though it could not alter, yet depressed his mind, and gradually as the contest deepened, gave an impress of sadness and determination to his character.

Elphinstone had even thus a much more difficult task to encounter in adjusting the dispute between him and Lord Lyndale than he at first believed; for in proportion as the usual courtesies were omitted by his neighbours, did Mr. Prince-

ton become more difficult to deal with in a matter where one of them was concerned. He would not on any account have it believed that his actions were dictated by a view to conciliation of even one of those who appeared to slight him, and he had begun to count Lord Lyndale in the number. One half of the misunderstandings in the world arise from trifling though intentional slights and their hasty reciprocation, than from serious injuries.

Ultimately by the suavity of his manners, Elphinstone prevailed on Mr. Princeton to attend a meeting with the Earl at his lordship's residence at Lyndale, to which he brought Mr. Charles Oliphant, not without some belief that he would aid him in settling the dispute on account of the interest taken in him by Mr. Princeton. After considerable discussion the boundaries were fixed to the mutual satisfaction of both landlords, and the pleasure all received had nearly restored their intercourse to its former friendly footing.

Lord Lyndale invited all engaged in producing this result to stay to dinner; and Mr. Princeton was then introduced to that learned gentleman, Mr. Oldenlaw, who pleaded the cause of the adversaries of the late Mr. Oliphant in the law suit in Edinburgh. He came that day to dine with his lordship, and brought with him the great political economist, Mr. Quivox, who had begun to attract more attention by the new doctrines which he promulgated in that exact science; although if it had not been for the diffusion of new ideas from France, and the impulse thereby given to political controversy, it may be doubted if his fame would have become very soon or very far extended. He himself in the first instance imputed this to the difficulties that beset the entrance to the temple of the Goddess of Political Economy, of which he was the high priest; but latterly he had no occasion to complain of neglect.

Oldenlaw threw aside his professional pedantry in general society; and under the satisfaction

arising from a dispute amicably concluded, every thing conspired to make the early part of the evening pass pleasantly away.

Oldenlaw when informed by Mr. Elphinstone who Mr. Oliphant was, felt much interested in the misfortunes he had undergone, and entered shortly into some explanations of his father's suit, to which Mr. Princeton paid much attention, especially to the account of Frankover's subsequent anxiety to have possession of the young gentleman's person, of which Mr. Elphinstone supplied various particulars. He suspected that something was wrong, and expressed as much to the lawyer, who had been too long accustomed to the secret machinery of law suits to be at all surprised if there was, or to be at all sanguine that time might perhaps unravel this one also. Mr. Princeton's feelings were not hardened by professional experience, but he had no clue at present to guide him through the legal labyrinth, in which Mr. Oliphant's fortunes were involved.

Mr. Quivox, impatient to find the conversa-

tion depending on such a heavy subject as the late Mr. Oliphant's affairs, resolved if possible to change it, and at the first pause rushed into politics generally, condemning everything foreign or domestic done or contemplated by the Government, which treated him with some neglect in the early part of his career, nor yet seemed fully sensible of his merits.

Lord Lyndale appeared to concur with him in some points, but thought the enormous debt contracted in the unsuccessful contest with America would tie up the hands of any Minister.

"Not in the least," said Quivox, who thus obtained the opportunity he had lain in wait for, "the debt that now exists is but a trifle; but were it ten times more, the resources of the country are sufficient; that is," he added, "if the Chancellor lays aside a fund to bear compound interest in order hereafter to meet the debt. But I fear he is ignorant of the principle on which this should be done."

Mr. Oldenlaw expressed his admiration of this

doctrine, which he said would be a comfortable one to some of those whose affairs he was in the habit of becoming acquainted with professionally.

Mr. Elphinstone also became interested, for he said he had various clients whose extravagance would be relieved by it. It was peculiarly agreeable to his sanguine ideas, and gilded the ideal future, on which he delighted to dwell, to find the means of discharging debts without the labour of making money or moderation in the use of it.

"There is nothing simpler than the plan of a sinking fund," said Quivox. "Let a sum be set aside to accumulate at compound interest for a few years, and by a calculation not involving much difficulty you will find it increase to an enormous amount, adequate to discharge all previous obligations bearing a moderate relation to the sum set aside," and then he showed, by an array of figures which he carried about with him tabulated, a result adequate to accomplish the discharge of the National Debt.

"Thus," said he "having set aside the sum, I propose, as quite adequate, within the time, for the purpose, we may hold the old account scored off, and begin a new contraction, to be liquidated in its turn by a deposit, and a compound interest process, as before."

It could not be disputed that Mr. Quivox seemed to prove his case by figures, for his compound accumulations realised the result he pointed out; and he enjoyed the triumph of his superior knowledge.

Mr. Oldenlaw merely observed that some had not the fund to sink, and others would not let it lie long enough, to lay so many golden eggs.

"That is their misfortune or folly," said Quivox, "but the affairs of a nation present no such difficulties." The fund can be provided, and there is no doubt we should be free of the National Debt in a few years; if," he concluded, "those in power would listen to the advice of one I shall not name."

Mr. Princeton, who had been hitherto silent,

said he could not pretend to dispute on such a question with him; but though his project were sound, the government of this country had no call to interfere in the affairs of another nation, or to prevent the attempts which were made to redress the grievances, under which France had so long laboured.

Lord Lyndale, who was entirely opposed to him in politics, said that these grievances were merely imaginary, and that now the French had gone far beyond redress, and been guilty of the most criminal excesses. "The same attempts are now making in Britain, but there is an efficacious mode of dealing with them," said his Lordship.

"What is that, my lord," inquired Princeton, "for it is not to be denied there is great need of reform in this country, also."

"It is to be denied," said his Lordship. "There is not one political grievance felt in this country, though there may be some practical grievances. My remedy for those who talk of

political grievances, is conviction and execution for sedition or treason as the case may be. Mr. Oldenlaw that lies some way in your road."

At this language, which directly impugned Mr. Princeton's political conduct, he could contain himself no longer, but started up and said, that his noble host had introduced reflections on the most sacred rights of the people, of a kind he could not listen to: he would depart, rather than trust himself to reply with the severity his words had provoked. Lord Lyndale felt he had gone too far, and made a faint effort to detain Mr. Princeton, in which he was seconded by Mr. Elphinstone, who was vexed and confounded at the turn the conversation had taken; but it was in vain.

After his departure, a general sadness instantly oppressed the company, except Mr. Quivox. He was totally callous, and began to labour at another division of his comprehensive science, the currency; maintaining that an un-

limited issue of paper money was expedient, to counteract any contraction of credit, to allow every man to indulge his taste for speculation, and to facilitate the payment of debts; and that as long as the paper could be given in exchange for British products, at its nominal value, there would be the more gold for foreign commerce. Mr. Oldenlaw ventured to suggest, that the gold would run all out, and the commerce be in risk of extinction; on which he was told that he had not studied the question, and was deficient in political science, an intimation he received with good humour, and promised to profit by attending Mr. Quivox's next lecture on the currency.

But Quivox was now unheeded, in the feeling of regret that had arisen. The wine, besides, had begun to do its office on him, making him forget restraint, and become vulgar, arrogant, presumptuous, and indecent; so that by common consent every one rose and took leave, till Qui-

vox remained alone to finish his next argument to the servants, whom he mistook for their master and his guests; and, in the end, these pupils transported the economist to his bedroom.

CHAPTER XI.

NEXT morning, on awakening, Mr. Princeton's thoughts were busy on the events of the preceding evening; and, as is usual when hasty language is used, he vainly regretted that he had been betrayed into any warmth of temper, especially in a conversation with Lord Lyndale at his own table, upon a subject which he had himself originated. He knew his lordship's feelings towards him had of late partaken of coldness, if not aversion. With these unpleasant reflexions he stepped into the lawn in front of the house, in the hopes that the smiling landscape which lay before him would divert his attention to

more agreeable objects, a power which he was aware nature exerted for the relief of all who love her works, instead of driving away the recollection of one exciting scene of life by plunging headlong into a new one. As he approached the gate, little Mary Morton came running towards him in tears, crying that her Charles had been carried away from her by three robbers.

Mr. Princeton, by a few questions, learned that the children had been gathering blackberries near the gate, when they were suddenly beset by three men, who took up Charles Oliphant, placed him before one of them on horseback, and then rode away in the direction that led towards Edinburgh. Mr. Princeton immediately returned to the house, loaded a brace of pistols, saddled a horse, and went off in pursuit. The child left to herself, for it was some little distance from home, came to Mrs. Morton, and told her the same story; but she would not give credit to it, and first sent her servants, and then went herself to the spot. The tears of the

child flowed afresh when they came to the place, and Mrs. Morton, who saw the marks of the horses' feet, now believed her, and went to Mr. Princeton's house. As he had just left on horseback, though his servants did not know whither, she rightly conjectured he was gone in pursuit, and pacified her grandchild by promising Mr. Princeton would soon bring Charles home again.

The men who had seized him turned short off after riding about a mile, into a road which led towards the sea; and Mr. Princeton proceeded near to Edinburgh, enquiring of those he met without success.

At length he suspected they must have taken another direction. Retracing his course, he pushed back with great rapidity, to the road they had turned into, and then followed onwards till he came up with them at a small inn, where they had stopped to feed their horses.

The men were in a room by themselves, and were drinking, but they had not sat down, and Mr. Oliphant was placed a little way off to prevent his

hearing the conversation. He had resolved to resist being carried further, though he knew not how to do so, unless by crying out to the passers by, and he had felt, from the grasp of the man before whom he rode, that a very speedy termination was likely to be put to such an appeal. To him, therefore, the appearance of Mr. Princeton was, as if an angel had come to save him.

Mr. Princeton dismounted, and demanded by whose authority they had seized the young gentleman, and who they were. As they hesitated what answer to make, and Mr. Princeton had repeated his questions more firmly, Frankover came riding up to the door, and soon entered the house. He immediately discovered from the attitude of the parties that Princeton was in time to mar his scheme, which he muttered to himself could only have happened from the drunken propensities of the rascals, and he saw from Mr. Princeton's appearance, his own security lay in denying all knowledge of the men or their enter-

prise. They felt assured of some countenance from him, but soon found, contrary to their expectation, he was an enemy, and joined in questioning them as to their object, after he learned—by a few words from Mr. Princeton—what had happened. Neither of them could succeed in obtaining a satisfactory answer.

The men stood as it were riveted to the spot, afraid to speak from fear of Frankover, and a sense of the danger in which they were involved.

On finding this Mr. Princeton resolved to apply to the next Justice of Peace, to apprehend and examine them; and as his friend, Mr. Vallance, resided in the neighbourhood, he desired the innkeeper to detain their horses, and Mr. Frankover himself volunteered, along with the landlord, to keep the men in custody till Mr. Princeton's return. The latter took Mr. Oliphant with him, to explain the affair; and in going thanked Mr. Frankover for the assistance he was so obliging as to offer, which would enable him to convict and punish men, whose offence deserved no leniency.

No sooner were they gone, and the landlord had left the room, than Frankover broke out, "Now are you not a set of the greatest rascals; I told you to make the best of your way to the ferry, where the boat would be ready for you, and here the whole opportunity is thrown away. Adamson, I think you know, as well as I do, the danger of your position."

Mr. Adamson, for it was the messenger who had engaged in this dangerous exploit, protested that the other two would stop at the inn, contrary to his most earnest entreaties, though he knew too well the danger of pursuit; and he desired Mr. Frankover to remember the men were not of his choosing, but Mr. Frankover's own.

"I believe all you tell me," said Frankover, "and confess they were joined with you by me. Drunken beasts, I could almost punish you myself for losing the opportunity, and running into danger besides. Away! take your horses and ride off in different directions."

They needed no second hint, and while the innkeeper stood uncertain what to do, they

mounted and rode off; as did at the same time Mr. Frankover himself.

In a short time Mr. Princeton arrived with Mr. Vallance, and learned, with the greatest surprise, what occurred in his absence. The magistrate took Mr. Oliphant's declaration, in which he stated he knew nothing of the three men, but mentioned his knowledge of Mr. Frankover; and this, with all that Mr. Princeton had previously heard, and the opportune appearance of the other, afforded so much ground for suspicion, that he a day or two afterwards, went to town, and was taking means to investigate the mystery. But Frankover, anticipating such an attempt would be made, and having previously become acquainted with the danger of Mr. Princeton, from political causes, as he was accustomed to make minute inquiries into the character and pursuits of all persons with whom he was likely to be connected in any way, so effectually ingratiated himself with those in power, that Princeton, baffled and disappointed, was told to keep a

guard over his own actions, instead of examining too narrowly the conduct of others.

He returned home somewhat out of humour with everything in this affair, except the share he had taken in rescuing Mr. Oliphant, who was now so much beloved by Mrs. Morton and Mr. Princeton himself, that for sometime they did not allow him to go any distance unless attended by a servant. A new attempt they feared might be made, and perhaps with more success, unless immediate resistance were offered.

CHAPTER XII.

About this time the Laird of Doolford, Mr. Waldie, now well up in years, though as young as ever in his attachment to this world, was stricken by the dart of the grizzly king, who appears without warning, and removes the fortunate and the unfortunate alike, from the scene of their success or their sufferings.

It was a dark and gloomy day for him, whose coming he was but ill prepared to meet, as his avaricious propensities, gratified through a long life, remained still unsatisfied, still like other vices craving indulgence. The fear of death is

terrible to those, whose hearts Heaven has not purified by misfortune.

"Let the minister be sent for," he cried, "for I hae paid him his stipend these many years to a day, and hae sought naething from him, neither at marrying, nor christening, nor at burial. He is much in my debt; but if he can pay me noo he may discharge it once for all."

While the minister was sent for, the things of this world, which it seemed impossible for him to forget, even in his extremity, still engrossed the Laird's attention.

"Tak that receipt to the bank, the morn, sister, and get the interest added to the principal, and see if there be nae a rise. John," he said to a servant, "Tell McMorran, to come up and shoe Diamond—a gude for naething loon, whom I'll turn out o' the smiddie, when I get weel. Look after that brute routing for her calf at the door, Minnie, and tie her up."

At this moment the surgeon rode up to enquire for his patient, and asked some minute

questions, which were answered by him in a querulous and even angry tone, as if his sense of danger was become too acute for deception.

The doctor saw from his glazed eye and sunken features he had not long to live, yet encouraged him in the contrary belief, and received his fee, which the miser parted with reluctantly, and his sister paid with her usual kindness of manner, so as to make the doctor forget or forgive the asperity and manners of her brother, who after he was gone broke out, "I hae fashed thae gentry but little a' my life, and they want to make it up noo. Help me just awa' into bed again, Jenny (he said to Miss Waldie), I'll be better the morn."

She who loved him with the tenderness of strong natural affection, which from her he at least deserved, assisted him to his bed, in a recess of the wall which was concealed by old fashioned doors, shut through the day, but that now must remain open. It was in vain that his sister and the doctor pressed him to make a tem-

porary use of a better aired bed. His father, he said, had used it before him, and so should his son.

Mr. Donble, the minister, when he was called on, promised his presence immediately. He respected the laird's wealth and soon found his way to Doolford. The duty of comforting the dying was one in which he engaged as seldom as possible; it was much more to his satisfaction to sit down at the tables of the wealthy and fashionable than visit the poor and afflicted.

His consolations on this occasion were cold, brief and lifeless, nor much heeded by the sufferer. But what right had he to expect more, who had lived in habitual disregard of these things, so that even a better man than Donble would have shrunk appalled from the duty of trying to touch so worldly a heart. The mind of the patient began to wander to the affairs of the present, and recur to scenes in his life not very agreeable to his conscience in the trying hour which had now arrived. All Mr. Donble's inquiries were therefore

answered so vaguely and incoherently, that he was glad to conclude the visit with a prayer, which was all he said that could be done; and then on pretence of other duties departed. Scarcely was he gone when Mr. Waldie said, "He's nae comforter that man ava; I have got nae thing frae him for a' that's been paid."

Miss Waldie was vexed, and said, "Oh brother! brother! you speak the words of despair. Pray, pray to heaven, which forgives all who repent." The depth and solemnity of her voice seemed to touch him, and he lay long silent, till a wandering fiddler coming to the door played "Sae merry as we've a' been," which reached the ear of the dying man, before the harmless intruder could be stopped. The music touched him; it spoke of a time when his heart was accessible to other influences than avarice. Under its spell he insisted, notwithwithstanding his sister's entreaties, that the musician should be brought in and commanded to play the air again and again, till the poor

man. whose blue gown, badge and lameness told he was an old soldier, began to understand the state of matters, and entreated to get away. "Give him siller, sister, for that spring, for he has done me mair gude than Donble, and brought me in mind of a jovial company. I think I see them; but the candles are burning dim—licht them—licht mair o' them and let him play again—quick, or they'll be all out. Lift the licht nearer me." With these words he sunk back on the pillow, sighed once or twice deeply; and life passed away.

Miss Waldie continued to watch for a minute or two in uncertainty, and the two women standing behind her were uncertain and silent, unable to determine if all was over. A man servant came into the room, and less liable to impression, approached the bed-side and placed his hand over the vacant countenance, but no breath being distinguished, he whispered to her, "He's gone." She had almost fallen, but sank back in a chair; and after many tears, in which her women joined,

rather than from sympathy with her than from any regard to her brother, who had a singular aptitude for producing dislike, she was conducted to her bed-room. An old crone was sent for from the next village to close the eyes, and adjust the corpse. That done, the senseless clay was made the subject out of doors of the usual idle preparations for a day or two preceding interment, and the usual letters were sent to assemble as many as possible on the occasion.

It was a clear day, and the long gray slabs shone beneath the warm beams of the sun in the churchyard of Lumfannan,—the green leaves on the old trees around the wall rustled mournfully as the fitful breeze stirred them and the long grass which grew around the edges of the stones.

"Willie, my man," said Johnnie Donner to his son, "bring me my spade and pick, for the Laird of Doolford is to be buried the day, and it's time to mak his bed."

The lad ran away for the implements of his

father's calling, while the old man stepped over a broken part of the churchyard wall—it was the nearest way.

The carpenter who had made the coffin and nailed it down followed Johnnie, and came up to him as he waited for his son.

"Sae ye were at the coffining yestreen, Sangster, and wad hae something gude nae doot. The sister's nae so gripping as the brother."

"Ow, aye, Johnnie, we had plenty; but I did na see the sister, and pinched eneuch fund my way hame."

The boy had by this time arrived with the spade, shovel and pick axe.

"It's lang sin this groun was opened," said Donner, "I think I mind though when I was a callant rinning aboot amang these graves, but wha went in is past my memory."

"Some freen of the Laird's, nae doubt," said Sangster.

"Aye, there's nae doot o' that. It's the family lair, and weel aired and dry the mouls will noo be."

He proceeded to take off and lay aside a portion of the turf, and then dug and talked at intervals.

"There will he pay for this job howe'er, but little there wad hae been if the new tenant had been to pay. But the sister is no a bad lady, and wad let some of the siller gang—the brother nane. Sin ever I mind him, ay, even at schule, for I'm sae auld, he was a creature that pairted wi naething. But a's ane noo."

His son who stood watching the father's exertions, now proposed to take the work, and relieve the old man from a labour which years were rendering severe.

"Awa wi you, boy. It's no deep enouch yet for your apprentice han'; ye wad spoil the work, and yet were it no for my ain credit, and the sister has reason in her, what signifies whether it's made weil or ill for sic a nigger as the Laird."

The work, however, became harder as it proceeded, and he at last laid down the spade and

scrambled out, telling his son to "gae in and keep the line."

The urchins from the village soon found their way to the ground, and notwithstanding several threats from the old man, kept peering into the hole, or leaping over the graves, or watching some relic of mortality thrown up, or casting a clod back on young Donner, who was as much a favorite with them as his testy father was the reverse. At last the old man, after giving a few directions to his son, pronounced his opinion that it would do, and drove the children away, lest, as he said, they might fa' in and break their legs.

"And noo, Sangster, as there will be something gaun to baith o' us, come awa to Cronkie's in the clachan, and we'll weet our craigs or he comes forrit."

The invitation was expected and was accepted.

In the meantime there appeared here and there on the road leading to the late Mr. Wal-

die's residence, some of his neighbours clad in black, or farmers riding in the same direction, and one or two might be seen taking a known foot path through his fields. Miss Jenny, after the first transports of sorrow, was able to see some of her female friends, of whom the well known substance of the departed, as usual, attracted a considerable number. They arranged a refreshment of bread and wine, which, after Mr. Donble's blessing, was partaken of by those who assembled; during which every one, though he might not have known the departed at all, or known him only to despise, puts on a countenance in keeping with so sad and so inevitable, and, alas! so soon forgotten an occasion.

Mr. Frankover had walked over out of apparent respect to Mr. Waldie's memory, but in reality to see if he could get engaged in his affairs; but Miss Waldie gave no evidence that she required his assistance.

An old hearse from the neighbouring town,

ornamented with waving black plumes stood at the door and received the remains, and the procession set out, slowly winding its way down the avenue and along the road to the church yard. The body was deposited in its last resting place with that absence of all solemnity or form of prayer, which Presbyterians affect, in order to mark that but dust alone is returned by them to dust. The earth was shovelled in, trod down, and the turf replaced by the grave-digger and his son, while the company stood looking on in silence; and when old Donner looked around, as much as to say the job is done, those present raised their hats, the only solemnity at the grave, and immediately separated.

Miss Waldie had kept herself in conclave with her female friends till the procession was gone. To one who enquired if her brother had left any will, she answered she did not know, nor ever heard him speak of it.

While the bustle of preparation necessary for appearance lasted, there was something to engage

her attention and to compel exertion, and the toiling poor really find that no exemption from their necessary work is, by the blessing of heaven, a relief from fruitless sorrow. She, not subject to the same necessities, now felt truly she was alone, with none to care for. The bonnet, or staff, or coat hanging on the wall caught her eye, no one of which would ever more be asked for, and the thought swelled her heart almost to bursting, while tears which might have relieved her were denied.

She sat down at a window and gazed on the fields which shone brightly under the rays of the setting sun, and heard, but heeded not, the sounds usually heard at that hour in the farm yard; her servants afraid to come near, or respecting her grief, stayed away, and daylight began to fail, while she remained brooding over her loss and reflecting that the last link which bound herself to this world was broken by her brother's death. He was ever kind to her, and often allowed his love of gold to be overcome by his brotherly af-

fection and by that alone. She had well repaid it, and while she disapproved his penurious and selfish disposition, had endeavoured to overlook it, and to do that privately and unknown to him, which in the discharge of the duty that every one owes to his suffering fellow men, he ought to have done himself.

She was at length aroused by one or two relatives who had attended the funeral, returning with Mr. Frankover, to know if any will had been made. As a refusal might be misconstrued she consented to a search in the old desks and drawers where her brother had kept his papers, but though there was ample evidence of his wealth, no deed could be found affecting its distribution. It belonged to her alone; but she had not reflected on it as they had done.

After their departure she sat down and relapsed into her former thoughts, during which she seemed to hear the well known voice, and started up as if to answer it. The moon came shining brightly at twelve through the window

of the room where he had died, and extended her cold beams along the floor. Tears at length found way and relieved her heart, and an old servant, who had watched the opportunity, ventured to speak to her, and persuaded her to seek the rest so necessary after the grief to which she had been a prey.

CHAPTER XIII.

Mr. Ostertoun, whose experience of mankind was extensive, and his conscience nearly as unscrupulous as Mr. Frankover's, would have concurred in any project to get quit of Charles Oliphant, and render himself secure, provided the execution of it involved nothing injurious to his worldly reputation. He had a distinct enough idea, as has already been hinted, that there was danger still to be apprehended, though the precise reasons for that opinion he could not explain; and merely dreaded something sinister, because he saw the depth of Frankover's anxiety, and knew he was not a man to be daunted

with shadows. Mr. Ostertoun was married, but without children, and his large fortune would probably be left by him to Miss Ashfield, who resided with him, a daughter of his sister, and, in the eyes of the world, the presumptive heiress of his fortune.

Mrs. Ostertoun did not object to the reception of his niece into her house, and in time came to love her almost as well as if she had been her own child; and thus, what was done by them from a humane and charitable motive, seemed to have been made a comfort and a blessing; and had been a source of satisfaction both to Mr. Ostertoun and to his wife, now growing old, without being able to repose the affections of the heart upon any child of their own.

On Miss Ashfield's return from the school, where she had finished her education, Mr. Ostertoun was delighted to find all his expectations realised. In the bloom of youth and beauty, Louisa Ashfield burst upon him, after an absence of two years, with such accomplishments,

that he clasped her to his bosom with parental tenderness; and his wife, who was lavish in her expressions of approbation of the appearance and progress of his niece, confirmed his satisfaction.

Mr. Monteith, of Glenmure, had lately returned from completing his travels on the continent, and was now in his twenty-fourth year. He had on his return been pushed forward into the command of a yeomanry corps of his native county, and in the pride which such an honour was calculated to produce, came on a visit to Mr. Ostertoun, whose wife was his relation, where for the first time he saw her niece. Of his own personal advantages it was difficult to speak with exaggeration. Tall, handsome, and straight as a willow, with blue eyes, sparkling with animation, a brilliant rosy complexion, finely formed head, and black curling hair, he was in every way fitted to become the object of a lady's affection, who looked not beyond that exterior perfection which has some

effect with the gentler, and a very powerful one with the stronger sex. And these natural gifts were well aided by fortune. A fine estate, of nearly ten thousand a-year, gave him the advantages of wealth, and there was thus open to him almost any matrimonial alliance he might be desirous to form.

He looked on Miss Ashfield as one who realised all his ideas of feminine beauty; and was overcome by her at first sight. Nor had his presence been without a corresponding effect on her inexperienced and youthful heart, which had not learned those necessary arts of concealment, dictated by prudence to the sex. Thus he was not slow in discovering that he would be an acceptable lover. Mrs. Ostertoun saw with pleasure the mutual affection which had arisen, for she well understood the advantages of an alliance with Colonel Monteith; and Miss Ashfield, besides a small estate to which she had succeeded, would have the large fortune of Mr. Ostertoun; and it did not enter her mind that any stratagem would

be used against a young lady living under her own eye.

Impressed with these views, she encouraged the intimacy which had arisen, but did not watch the conduct of Colonel Monteith, and believed the rank and relationship of Miss Ashfield, secured her from any improper design of her lover. He, however, had formed that design, and his continental experience, which seems the principal acquisition of a tour of Europe, had dissipated any considerations of honour. Mr. Ostertoun himself was too often absent to be able to supply any want of watchfulness on the part of his wife; and indeed his knowledge of the world, though most extensive as regarded mankind, was small in such an affair as engaged the mind of Monteith.

In her childhood Louisa Ashfield attracted the attention of the son of a poor widow, at whose house her own mother, reduced to difficulties by the extravagance of Mr. Ashfield, and then without assistance from Mr. Ostertoun, was in the

habit of calling and receiving advice, which the other's experience enabled her to afford. Mr. Ostertoun was then employed in India, but without fortune and unknown, and his sister and her child had been left little, when Mr. Ashfield's death terminated a reckless and expensive course of dissipation.

The boy had been accustomed to watch Miss Ashfield's looks, to strive to obtain her regard, for even in one so young, predilections are found to exist, to be destroyed by the advance of life and the strife and struggle of the world; and he was happy if she noticed him, herself unconscious of the feelings she was thus appearing to favor; and he knew no harm, and in the happy ignorance of childhood, felt no fears of the future. But years and his own and a mother's necessities carried Jack Smith to sea, and he had voyaged over half the globe, while his fair, youthful companion, was acquiring that education and knowledge which helped her to forget, if indeed she ever thought further of him than when on the play ground.

But Jack cherished in prospect his early attachment. Indeed the perils and the trials of his new life, the mighty world of ocean on which he lived, afforded food for his affections, and set them growing in vigour; for solitude, whether by land or water, affords the imagination room to play, and delights to deck the future in lively colours. The feelings of the heart are not then scattered upon a variety of objects of temporary and inferior interest, but people from memory, the solitude in which, and the future for which, they live.

But he had not been careless or unsuccessful, and with some gold in his pocket, and hopes of making more, a heart, good and true, and a hand that well could play a part in any affair he might be engaged in, he landed in Liverpool, and soon reached his aged mother's house.

"I must this night surprise her," he said, as with beating heart he approached it, close by the shore in the little village of Seacliff. There were the fishermen mending their boats and nets, and the women baiting their hooks, just as he had

left them; the urchins were wading and sailing their little boats in the tide that laved the white and sandy beach with its tiny ripples; the girls were on the green, and a joyful hum floated in the air, all as he remembered them when he was one of the innocent band. He went straight to his mother's door, attracting no observation in his seaman's dress, and not even recognised; so soon does time change the absent, and remove companions, and so common is the blue jacket in the pleasant towns and villages scattered on the long margin of Britain's isle, those nurseries of her bold, constant, and surest defenders. He knocked, and on his mother opening, he with difficulty counterfeited his voice, and inquired in a gruff tone, if she was Mrs. Smith.

"I am Widow Smith."

"And you have a son abroad?"

"Yes."

"Well, I can give you some news of him."

"Then Heaven be praised. Come in and sit down."

He stepped in and sat down, while she set about preparing something good to eat, for she said he must eat, and she would get the news as she walked about. And no great change in her, he was happy to observe, had taken place.

"A little thinner—her hair a shade whiter," he said mentally, "but, thanks to Heaven, I find my mother well."

As she stepped about, bringing in table, tray, and her best set of china, she kept asking one question after another:

"Where did you last see my son?"

"Oh, mother, I've seen him not so long since. We kept company four weeks in China, met again at Bombay, sailed up the Red Sea, and"—

"Bless me, that my son should have been there; he'll ha'e much to tell me, but whar did ye see him last? I want to ken if he's near his ain bonnie town here, that these auld e'en may see him again. There are no many things that ever drive him out o' mind."

This was a home-thrust, which he could not

parry or withstand, but starting up, as she turned away to bring some new addition to the tea table, he drew off the handkerchief which he had muffled round his chin, took her in his arms to her astonishment and even terror, and asked if she had never seen him before.

The rough beard, the fuller and firmer features, made her hesitate, till he smiled, when she knew her boy at once, and clasped him to her heart.

"You rogue," she said, as she dried her tears, "this is another trick you have been playing on your mother, and I canna' now pay you as I did lang syne."

He laughed outright, and almost danced in the extravagance of his joy, interrupting sadly her pleasing preparations, till she commanded him to sit down, and behave himself decently, as he had grown she said beyond her strength, and she could now only shake her head at him. Thus brought to anchor, he rocked in his berth, as one well remembered article after another met his

eye; while she bustled about with all the fondness and affection of a parent, now pressing him to eat—now pressing him with questions—while he declared he had tasted nothing so good as she set before him, since he had left her.

"Not even the Chinese," he said, "could make tea as well; and her bread and butter were as good as when he could not get enough of them."

At length the subject which next occupied his thoughts, after the kind parent before him, was introduced by his inquiring,

"Where is my old play-fellow, Louisa Ashfield?"

"My dear child, she is just come home finished with her lare, and is to be married to Colonel Monteith."

The words were like a sudden wound. He started, almost overturning the little tea-table, which he apologised for by saying he thought he was still on board ship. But he knew his mother neither did, nor could suspect him; and after a

silence of a minute or two he inquired when the marriage was to take place.

"Oh, wha kens that—it's the talk of the kintra—naething certain. There are mony tales o' that kind that offer something to talk about and end in naething after a'."

"But what kind of man is the Colonel?"

"Oh, a great man—a fine man and a gran' estate, and house, carriages, and horses, and servants."

"Well, mother! I have none of these; but what is he like?"

"A nice looking young man, just a fit one for sae good a young lady."

"Well, she deserves all that and more," he concluded.

The general tenor of his mother's words somewhat re-assured him: he had ascertained that the Colonel was in the neighbourhood, and Miss Ashfield at home and nothing concluded. Next he turned his inquiries to old friends and fami-

lies in the village. Upon these the mother enlarged with the garrulity of one who had little else to interest her than the fortunes of herself and her neighbours. Faithful to general rules, though the events may occur in far distant spots, the history of the village families exhibited the usual variety of fortune. Jack Smith smiled when he found an old playfellow well, fighting with the troubles of the world successfully, or wedded to a neighbour's daughter; or grieved at the misfortunes of others, whether the consequences of their own imprudence, or of the circumstances in which they were placed. Question and answer succeeded each other, till the old clock in the corner struck twelve. He started up exclaiming,

"We durst not have been out of bed even here at such an hour long ago, and except on deck in my turn, I was swung in my hammock long before this. Let's turn in: the rest we shall talk over to-morrow."

His mother had spread him a bed with sweet smelling sheets, into which he tumbled, and soon fell asleep, to dream sometimes of his ship and all that had gone on on board, and sometimes of his mother or Louisa Ashfield.

CHAPTER XIV.

JACK SMITH awakened next morning refreshed and happy to find himself once more in the home of his childhood, with its little garden looking on the sea, and he could hardly withdraw himself from contemplating the glorious bay trembling beneath the rays of a powerful sun, while the gray sandy beach with its white shells seemed longing to be bathed in the brimming flood. He had crossed the vast Pacific and Atlantic, but felt even from his mother's window, with its twining foliage of flowers and honeysuckle, that it was indeed the privilege of ocean to be ever strong,

nor to contract under the heats of summer nor expand with the torrents of winter. While rivers become brooks at one season, or swell and overflow till they seem like lakes at another, ocean, he felt, still retains his size, without increase as without diminution, flowing round the boundary of earth without recognising the influence of kindred or warring elements, either to extend or to retard him.

Poor Mrs. Smith was hardly able to rest for excess of joy. She was however early up, and had been to the shore to tell of her son's return, and to procure from the fishermen what would give him a taste of old times. She received him with so much delight, and he was himself so much happier in the old house in the morning, that it would have been difficult to point out as well satisfied a pair within many miles.

She wished he might never again leave her, and could hardly forbear hinting so much to him at the breakfast table, but to her suggestions on this head he returned a good natured smile,

and asked her if she would not wish to see him a captain.

"Na, indeed," she replied, "if you will not leave me again I shall want for naething."

"At least," he said, "you will wish some of the fine things I have brought from the foreign countries I have been in."

"Na, it is eneuch ye hae brought me yoursel again"

"Well, but I see my trunks are come up from the boat; let us at least see what's in the hold."

He opened them and displayed various little boxes containing tea, dried fruits, preserves, and in another shawls and handkerchiefs so rich and many, that he seemed for the time an Eastern Magician, drawing them out of what seemed no space in endless succession.

"Now you shall take, mother, whatever you choose."

She turned and returned the wares, even at her years, with some of that interest in dress that

clings to Eve's fair daughters, as a consequence of her original slip, through youth, womanhood, and even old age; and he, delighted because she was pleased, would not interrupt her examination nor dictate her choice. Gradually the more gaudy were dismissed and a plain and sober looking shawl or two were selected.

"Take more, you can keep them if you cannot wear them."

"No, my dear, I might be tempted even at my years to some folly, so I will have no more."

"Then, mother, you must help me in one matter. I wish you to choose two of these you think best, and take them to Miss Ashfield, and ask her to accept the present of her old school mate."

The mother who had been leaning over the trunks stood up surprised, looked at him once or twice, while a slight glow arose on his cheek, which she well understood, and sighed as she said,

"Ah, lad; that's a cut far aboon you. The

gentle match wi' the gentle—the grown girl forgets her young mate—the rough boy finds a rougher world to woo him."

"But you see, mother, I have escaped the wooer and brought something; see what is here," and as he spoke he produced a purse well filled with gold pieces. Here again his mother expressed her admiration of his success; and he, simple sea boy, thought his purse and its glittering contents a match for the broad acres of any competitor, and indeed to look at his manly form, and watch his ready smile and open countenance, so free of deceit, no one would deny he might enter on the contest with every chance of success.

"And then for myself, mother, I can work and win more, and besides I shall, please Heaven, be captain of the Centaur myself in time. I have half a promise from the owners."

His mother again eyed him with maternal fondness, and would have thought there were few girls but might have been glad of such a lover, if her knowledge of the world had not

made her aware of the extravagance of her son's ideas. She however also knew, that these generally are neither to be disturbed by reason nor reflection, but receive their quietus through stern and indisputable facts, producing the usual grief and disappointment.

"Now, mother, will you do my errand?"

"Yes, my dear, I will, but I wish for your comfort you—"

"Tut, never mind. Faint heart never wins. But at least I bought them and brought them for you and her, and it would vex me to think it had been vain."

His mother chose two, and went up to Mr. Ostertoun's. Miss Ashfield was ready to see her, and expected she was come upon something where her interest would be needed with Mr. Ostertoun.

"What is it I can do for you, Mrs. Smith? You know I will do any thing. And when did you hear from Mr. John?" This was the time, nor did the mother fail to use it.

"Indeed I am so much obliged to you, Miss Ashfield. I want for nothing; but Jack is just come to bless my eyes once again, and he has brought something for you from India." Then she produced the shawls, and said he desired her acceptance of them from her old schoolmate.

Miss Ashfield hesitated, blushed, smiled, examined the beautiful cashmeres, thought of Colonel Monteith, thought of asking Mr. Ostertoun, and ended by consulting Widow Smith.

"My dear," she said in answer, "I believe you will vex him so much by refusing what he has brought far for you, that I think you should take them. He is a sailor, and means to gie them merely to please you."

"Well, I may take them; but if I knew the price, I would now send it to him. I shall afterwards ascertain it."

"You winna do that. He'll ne'er think o't again."

Perhaps he will not, thought Miss Ashfield; and then said,

"Well, they are indeed beautiful, and I must, I dare say, take them; but must also think of some repayment."

"Indeed you shall not: your mere acceptance will be enough for him."

There was danger in protracting the negotiation; for Mrs. Ostertoun, if she appeared, would most probably disapprove of every thing said or done: and Mrs. Smith was glad to bring the interview now to a close, by alleging some excuse for going away.

Jack had gone backwards and forwards from this and the other house to his mother's, in a state of uneasy excitement, almost speaking aloud the tumult of his mind, till he learned the result.

He was mightily pleased that his present had been accepted, and was hearty in commendation of his messenger. "But could you not have said, mother, I would wish to see her?"

"Hoot no, my son: ye must find out the way of saying that yoursel."

"True enough, mother, and I shall find it out before long."

Jack moved about among his old friends, those few that yet remained in the place of his own age, receiving their congratulations on his return; and for a few days regularly walking towards Mr. Ostertoun's, and as regularly stopping at the gate, watching his opportunity of an accidental meeting, and returning disappointed.

He found the rumour, which his mother had mentioned, of Miss Ashfield's engagement to Colonel Monteith, prevalent both in the village and the neighbourhood; and the description of the wealth, the estate, rank, and appearance of his formidable rival, was enough to discontent and render him diffident and unhappy. Indeed, most men would have submitted to be held defeated without a struggle; for not far off were bright eyes and rosy faces, the flowers of his native town, and one of them might have consoled him for being obliged to slacken sail, and give

up the chase of such a high prize as seemed now luring him on to wreck his peace of mind and worldly prospects. But he heeded not the fair faces around, his heart and soul being fixed on one object; and not the less tenaciously, that he now felt there must be a struggle, of which the result appeared doubtful, at times, even to his buoyant spirits and confident heart.

In a casual visit to a friend he learned that a young woman, formerly maid to Miss Ashfield, was about to be married, and that the lady had promised to honour the occasion with her presence. "This," thought he "is my time," and he soon found out the bridegroom, who saved him even the trouble of mentioning his wish, by inviting him to be of the party, a circumstance which he set down to a special providence, as sailors will do; and trusted confidently to renew an attachment which, simple hearted fellow, he believed had only been interrupted by distance, and not by the ordinary course of events which

would long before have disenchanted him, had he not been living in this particular affair, in a world of imagination as unstable as the waves upon which he had been tossed ever since he parted from the object of his early affection.

CHAPTER XV.

Mr. Ostertoun would have approved of his niece giving any countenance to a domestic of his family that she saw fit; but his wife had somewhat more difficulty, and nearly made up her mind to have Miss Ashfield, on some ground or other, excuse herself. The young lady would have readily agreed to her aunt's wishes, but these, she knew, were often somewhat variable, and she left her to decide the matter in her time and own way. Ultimately a feeling for her former servant got the better of an indefinable sensation of doubt and fear, and she gave her consent.

Jack Smith rigged himself out in his gayest attire, and had gone to look at the clock and

strayed out into the garden, times without number, before a message came by the bridegroom's youngest sister to say he was expected in half an hour.

"Come in my dear," said Mrs Smith, "and let my son hear you sing till it be time to go." The child threw back her flaxen locks, and then hid her head in Mrs. Smith's lap, who soon reassured her, and she began her little song to the sailor's surprise, though it was an old acquaintance brought to mind, not heard since he was her own age.

"Minnie now the lad's come,
Minnie now the lad's come,
Yere no to look sae fashed and glum,
Minnie now the lad's come.

"My sailor lad's came frae the sea,
What though he be of low degree;
The light o' love is in his ee,
And weel he kens to woo.
Minnie, &c.,

"His jacket blue and heart sae true,
The smile upon his merry mou,
Had made yoursel be fain to loo
A sailor lad like mine."

Jack hailed the omen with delight, pressed the

little songstress to his heart, praised the song and paid for it with a dollar. "Now, mother, you see we sailors like a good sign, and this is the right thing, for nobody taught this little curly-head to please me, and yet she has sung the best song I have heard since I went to sea." His mother merely smiled, but said nothing; and he would have it repeated. "It is the thing, my little dear; and you will have a seaman to sing it to yourself one day, and now you and I will just go down the street together." He lifted the child in his strong arms and bore away for her brother's, while the women who chanced to meet him in the street could not forbear smiling on his merry face as he carried the child, like a bird, on his arm, and he had a cheerful nod or word for them in return.

The ceremony was soon over, and then the happy party repaired to the ball-room, a large apartment, which the next inn appropriated for similar purposes, and set out for the occasion. Miss Ashfield had been too much occupied with

little attentions to the bride and her friends to pay any regard to the young men who were present, and it was not till she was at leisure to look round the room that she at last recognised Smith, who then advanced and bowed. She immediately entered into conversation, thanked him for his presents, and asked him some particulars of the various places he had seen. His answers, given with all the freedom and gaiety of his profession, had a pleasing effect, while her beauty, now in full bloom, struck a thousand darts through his heart, and her consent to honour him with her hand in the dance completed his satisfaction. The fiddle struck up the lively dance music of his native land, and the floor was occupied by youth and beauty in the enjoyment which befits them.

Smith was desirous to appear to advantage, and as his fair partner and he were the handsomest and best looking couple, they soon attracted those who were not engaged at the same moment in the dance; and space was made by the

bystanders who muttered words of praise of the handsome pair. Even Miss Ashfield, in the excitement of the moment, forgot Colonel Monteith and his fortune, and half thought her present partner no unworthy competitor; and as for poor Jack he imagined the game was going exactly as his most sanguine expectations had suggested.

Colonel Monteith had been dining at a neighbouring gentleman's house, where the wine circulated freely, according to the custom of the time. As the common report of the country had reached his friends at the table, he was subjected to some of the raillery usual on such occasions; but he declared that the whole story of his engagement to the lady was a ridiculous invention, and even treated the mention of the subject with so much asperity that his companions were glad to desist.

In the evening he and two of the guests repaired to Mr. Ostertoun's, where they learned Miss Ashfield's engagement, and resolved to go to the ball-room, altho' Mrs. Ostertoun, who fore-

saw no good likely to arise, and considerable risk of evil, opposed their resolution by every argument which prudence and their own rank could suggest.

Mr. Ostertoun would have opposed their design as much as his wife, and probably with more success, if he had had an opportunity; but he was absent. On reaching the room they were enabled to get a view of the dancers, from the place where they stood, near the door, and Colonel Monteith had the mortification of seeing the dangerous rival, who occupied the floor with Miss Ashfield, of hearing their praises murmured by the onlookers, and of being placed in a situation from which pride and jealousy would not allow him to withdraw; all of which might have been avoided by one less arrogant and proud, or who could comprehend what was due to those of a lower condition than himself. Each approving smile of Miss Ashfield was bitterness to him, and not the less that he required to betray none of the feelings which agitated his

mind to his two companions. The praises of his unconscious rival he could not endure; and as soon as the dance was over, he introduced himself—and his two friends—to Miss Ashfield's notice. Surprised at their appearance, she received them with cheerfulness, and when Colonel Monteith ventured to hint, in the malevolence of his heart, that her society was by no means select, she replied that the happy hearts around would feel or think nothing to her prejudice, and she believed would honour her the more for taking part in their innocent amusements.

But while this conversation went on, the dancers drew back, struck with the rank and appearance of the visitors. Silence succeeded, and whispers went round the room. Smith impatient of the interruption inquired who they were, and to his surprise and confusion now saw his rival for the first time, of whose claims to regard, from personal appearance, he became instantly sensible; nor yet over-rated his own, when he believed they would not suffer much by comparison, in the smart style in which he was

dressed for the occasion. But his opponent's estate, high rank, and connection turned the scale in his favour, even to Smith's own conviction, and the marked attention with which the lady treated Colonel Monteith, at once threw a damp over his gay imaginations.

The Colonel had no intention to figure on the floor himself, and expressed some hints to the contrary to his two friends, who had neither jealousy nor envy to stir the demon of discord in their hearts, and were inclined to join in whatever promised excitement and fun. He was only anxious to carry off Miss Ashfield from the party, and again whispered to her his surprise that he should have found her in society so much beneath her.

"Ah! never mind that," said the cheerful girl, "I must please my former servant, and if my presence will do that, it will have been well bestowed. Besides, I am here, and it would offend if I were to leave abruptly. 'Twere better I had not come, than to leave them now."

"You are the best judge, madam," said the

Colonel, about to leave; "but I still think your presence might have been given, without taking part in the pantomime. Let the clodhoppers and Jack tars dance with their proper partners."

Smith was not near enough to overhear this conversation, but he guessed it as well as if he had, and was burning with indignation, not knowing how to display his feelings effectually. The silence and gloom continued, till the scene became so intolerable, that he determined to make an effort:

"Are we on a sudden become a Quaker meeting?" he cried. "The ball will go on, and let us have a country dance. Miss Ashfield," he said, advancing, "will honour me with her hand? We shall take, with your permission, the head, to which she alone is entitled."

A murmur of applause followed, as the graceful and gallant seaman stepped up to the lady and bowed.

She blushed like scarlet and then turned deadly pale, as a horse laugh burst from Colonel Monteith and his friends. The insult was so

direct and cutting, and occurred so abruptly, that Smith, who felt he could not be mistaken in the inference that there was a determination to insult, turned round on the moment and struck the Colonel a blow in the face with his iron fist that at once stretched him on the floor. His two friends rushed on the assailant, but were in a few seconds dismissed by the same strong hand, bleeding and discomfited. Miss Ashfield fainted and was carried out, and the other females were in the utmost terror, while the men gathered round to see the end of the affair, but gave no assistance to Colonel Monteith, who raised himself as he best could from the floor, and turned to look for Miss Ashfield; but she was gone. The men generally were silent, but not dissatisfied, as they thought Smith had only vindicated what was due to both; but one or two of the seamen took part with him openly, and said he had done what was right.

"Colonel Monteith," said Smith, "you came here uninvited, and you have behaved with brutality :—I have punished you for it, and if you

do not leave the room we shall turn you out without ceremony."

The Colonel muttered something about his antagonist being safe amongst his associates, and that he must yield to numbers.

"Talk not of numbers, you shall find me single always as ready as now to resent and punish an insult."

The Colonel and his friends were but too sensible that they were grossly in the wrong, but from their rank and the habitual respect in which they were held by many of those present, they never would have expected any violence to their own persons or sympathy with the fiery seaman. They were undeceived, and nothing remained but to slink away. But vengeance employed their thoughts, and they set themselves on their return to the house where they had dined, with deliberating the most effectual means to be used for accomplishing their purpose.

In the meantime, Miss Ashfield in terror and vexation was proceeding homewards in Mr. Ostertoun's carriage, and as she drove along saw

the necessity of informing her aunt of the whole affair, which she did with perfect impartiality, knowing that on such occasions the truth is to be preferred before any temptation to please one or other of those who may have been engaged, and who commonly report every circumstance with such a glaring diversity of facts that certainty cannot be extracted from either side—a result which not unfrequently happens in more important affairs. The good lady was confounded and perplexed beyond measure at the incident, astonished at the temerity of Smith, of whom she knew nothing, and the neglect of those present in the room to protect or assist Colonel Monteith. To repeated questions, which went beyond the occasion, her niece gave unsatisfactory answers—truth then changed its value in her eyes—but the aunt came at last to the conclusion that Smith was accidentally present; and that her niece knew nothing more of him than what had occurred in the ball-room.

"And enough it is," said the lady. "You and I will have much to do to pacify Colonel

Monteith. He is too good a match to be lost sight of for this silly affair."

Miss Ashfield knew her aunt was too much interested in this point of view to listen to any thing in the shape of doubt, and she retired in tears, and passed the night sleepless and a prey to a thousand conflicting emotions.

The fiery seaman pressed the party to continue the ball, and not to be disturbed by the impudent intrusion they had experienced. Gradually they recovered a portion of their life and spirits; the music helped to soften and turn the feelings into another channel; and Smith, though he did not continue to take the same interest, yet maintained to the last his fearless bearing, and exerted himself to assure and amuse all about him.

As the dawn began to appear the party broke up, and Smith found his way home where his poor mother welcomed him, for patiently she had waited. He chid her gently for doing so, blamed himself greatly as the cause, but forbore to alarm her with any particulars of the affair with Colonel Monteith.

He knew the respect, almost amounting to veneration, which she paid to rank and fortune, a feeling which he had shared himself, until enlarged ideas, adopted by mingling in the world, and encountering serious dangers, had taught him, that neither lord nor laird was entitled to extraordinary respect, unless there was more foundation for it than rank and fortune, these being of little value where perils are to be dared, labours to be undertaken, competition to be encountered—a fair field for all, and no favour for any. He knew besides she would probably enough hear of it next day; but at least a little time in such cases is useful to strip away the exaggerations, which so generally attend any thing novel and exciting in a small community.

Time produces reflection; and he trusted his conduct, when impartially considered, would not deserve severe condemnation, however hasty and violent in some degree it had been.

CHAPTER XVI.

Mr. Ostertoun had been so long engaged in enlarging his fortune, and watching mere temporal prosperity, that he forgot those calls of domestic duties, which men cannot neglect without being exposed to misfortunes on a side where they see no ground for apprehension. Exclusive devotion to one object may produce the result which it deserves; and yet that is destined, through the inscrutableness of providence, to crumble into dust in the hands even which grasp it, and leave in the end but vain regrets for labour misspent, affections stifled, the gentler amenities of life neglected, and little duties and kindnesses forgot, which arise in a long array to confront

the disappointed devotee of wealth, after the time for their exercise is gone for ever.

He had left his house in the country for Edinburgh, to assist, at least by his countenance, Mr. Frankover's last attempt to get possession of the person of the heir of the late Mr. Oliphant; but he left to that gentleman the mode and the time of action, contenting himself with making any suggestions which the circumstances might demand, and abundantly careful that he should in no way appear to be connected with whatever was done.

He was sitting in his own house, in expectation of Frankover's return, when the door-bell was rung, and Mr. Frankover was ushered in, whose countenance displayed, almost before he spoke, the total failure of the scheme.

"All has gone to wreck," cried Frankover, "and through the carelessness of the scoundrels employed."

"Mr. Frankover, you should have remembered," said Ostertoun, "it was a matter requiring care and attention and sufficient men."

"I thought they were so, and at least Adamson did his duty, and I was not far off; but the men, after seizing him, stopped at an inn to drink, and that gave time to Mr. Princeton to come up and recover the young man."

"And who is Mr. Princeton?"

"Why he is one of the men who call themselves the friends of the people, but a large proprietor in the neighbourhood of Mrs. Morton's, where the boy is."

"Oh, yes! I have heard of him; and you may expect an enquiry to be made, for he is not a man that will omit it, where so bold and off-handed a proceeding has occurred."

"I know it, and I have been beforehand with him. Let him come when he may, his political opinions are now so well discovered in a quarter we both know of, that he will have much more difficulty in defending himself than in attacking others. We are quite safe, thanks to my own enquiries regarding his opinions, and the way I have explained them."

Ostertoun mused over the whole affair, and

at last said, "We shall have trouble from this Princeton, by George; from his habits of independent investigation and action, he will infallibly enter upon some examination of the causes which could prompt so sudden and violent an attempt; nay he may put the whole question with the late Mr. Oliphant, in some view for which we are unprepared, and come upon us all too suddenly. I wish we had succeeded or never made the attempt."

"Well," said Frankover, "your opinion and apprehensions are not without foundation; but so much business do I intend this Mr. Princeton shall have of his own in hand, that he will not have much time to bestow on the affairs of his neighbours. The pit is dug for him, into which, if he proceeds in the reckless course he is now in, he must inevitably fall; and then we shall have none but Elphinstone to deal with, who is too harmless—too weak—too much occupied with a hundred projects, to give any serious attention to Oliphant's affair."

Mr. Ostertoun felt considerable comfort from

these views of Mr. Frankover; and he prepared to remain in Edinburgh to watch the motions of Princeton, while Frankover returned to the country, to avoid any troublesome personal inquiries that might be made of him, regarding the men he had volunteered to detain, and assisted to escape.

Mr. Ostertoun continued in Edinburgh, and thus was absent from the place where his presence would have been a check on Colonel Monteith, and would have saved him from a calamity which he would have parted with half his fortune to avert.

CHAPTER XVII.

COLONEL MONTEITH very soon recovered from the personal effects of the blow he received from the hand of Smith; but the insult had sunk deep into his soul, and his associates on that occasion had suggested a plan of revenge. As, however, he could not learn much of Smith except that he was the son of an old woman in the village, and had newly returned from sea, after a long absence, it appeared unlikely that Miss Ashfield's meeting with him, that evening, was otherwise than accidental. She came in for a share of the Colonel's resentment, though unjustly; and when he next visited at Mr. Ostertoun's, he observed towards her a distant

and sullen manner, to the infinite regret of the aunt, and discomposure of the niece.

Mrs. Ostertoun hastened to assure him that the young lady's presence was entirely to do a kindness to an old servant, and that the young man who had danced with her was totally unknown previously—and so indeed she believed: while her niece heard her words, and hesitated to contradict them. But explanation must follow contradiction; the aunt would be offended; the lover, perhaps, be lost; and in silence she listened to her aunt's excuses. It had been better, even at any risk, to let the whole truth be known. There was nothing that could have compromised her, except the first imprudence of receiving the gift of the shawls, and even that might have admitted of a simple and not unjust construction.

Gradually the indifference and gloom of the Colonel gave way before the beauty and liveliness of his mistress. When the aunt left them for a little, he seized the occasion to press his suit; though, as he never mentioned marriage,

Miss Ashfield avoided committing herself by any express admission of the interest he had acquired in her heart, which was considerable, for she had been accustomed to regard him with favour. She knew her aunt desired this union, and even to herself it offered much attraction.

If she could have looked within the breast of that man, and discovered only plans against her honour, only selfishness and pride; if she could have suspected that the handsome lover before her was but a heartless libertine, she would indeed have preferred the humble seaman with truth and genuine affection. But Monteith's disposition was really unknown to her; Smith's she could discover at a glance to be every way good, but he failed in those requisites which must and ought to prevail, if woman is not to forget those maxims of prudence which the other sex has opportunities all through life of exercising, she really only but once, and with the prospect generally of years of misery and poverty, always of privation and anxiety, if she follows her affections not her interest, in the acceptance of a husband.

Smith did not omit a daily walk towards Mr. Ostertoun's, in the hopes of seeing the fair object of his heart; but she kept herself within, resolved to avoid giving farther encouragement to one who was so prompt and determined in all his actions. He met with no opportunity such as he wished. His mother saw and guessed the cause of his grief; he had lost the cheerfulness of manner and elasticity, mental and bodily, that usually distinguished him, but as she by no means approved of his following an unattainable object, she did not engage him in any conversation about Miss Ashfield. She had heard, indeed, with alarm and regret, the affair with Colonel Monteith, and expected her son would mention it, but he abstained from doing so.

"Why should I pain her," he reflected, "with an account of my passion and violence. I am desirous to forget it, and hope my antagonist will do the same."

Notwithstanding his perseverance he still failed to meet with Miss Ashfield, and at his age and with his impetuous soul, he began to ques-

tion whether he was not neglected, and to doubt if he should not withdraw from the pursuit. Still the proximity of her residence, the ineffaceable recollections of childhood, the kind reception he had experienced, and the want of any other immediate object to distract his attention, all combined to keep him intent on the one, resolute not to desist while a hope remained of success. His mother who felt for him, and could not contrive any means to comfort, almost wished he were away from a spot so fatal to his peace, and again engaged in the active exercise of his profession.

As he was sauntering along the shore gazing with some degree of melancholy pleasure upon the broad expanse of ocean, and almost wishing he could be borne away on its breast from the scenes that had now become so painful, he observed a coach leave Mr. Ostertoun's gate, in which were seated Miss Ashfield herself, and, as he thought, his rival. He believed he could not be in error, but if possible to make sure of the fact, he went forward after they had gone some

distance, and ascertained at the gate he was not mistaken, to his infinite mortification. He even thought he had been observed by the lady, and that she seemed desirous to avoid his observation, by suddenly drawing back in the coach.

"It is well," he thought, "that I have not pursued this phantom of my feelings and affections further, and it had been well had my judgment enabled me to put them to flight long before they fell by this blow. She despises one so humble, and the heavier purse as usual wins the day."

As thus he pursued the melancholy reflections to which disappointed hopes were giving birth, he observed a large ship come round the head, which shortly afterwards anchored in the bay. It was not unusual, he knew, for a King's vessel to be stationed there, and to cruise about the coast, and there was nothing extraordinary in a boat being sent ashore, perhaps to land an officer, or for provisions. He observed one leave the ship, and the steady sweep of the oars of her well-disciplined crew, soon brought them to the

beach. Several landed and came towards him, and to his surprise one who was slightly in advance of the rest, inquired for him by name. Another before he had time almost to think if he should answer, said,

"I think you are just the lad."

He said he was.

"So, ho! brother! what cheer?" cried the first; "shall we have a glass of grog together."

"No," said Smith, "some other time, comrade; at present I am in no mood."

"Ah! here is Jack Buntin; and looking out for the publican's colours. You can help us; come along. Here, Jack, bear-a-hand."

To Smith's astonishment the sailor seized him, but exerting his strength he shook him off. Buntin closed in, and one or two more were at hand.

"Come, my hearty," said Buntin, "no offence, I hope, but you must favour us with your company;" and he made as if he would seize him, and was knocked down by Smith, now effectually alarmed.

But a third seaman struck him on the head with a cudgel, and before he could recover himself they were in upon him, pinioned his arms, and immediately carried him off to the boat.

This singular scene attracted observation; and the fishermen of the village, with whom Smith was so great a favourite, began to gather and throng down, with an intention apparently to attempt a rescue; but the glancing of the sailor's cutlasses, and the appearance of one or two muskets, brought to bear upon the shore from the boat, reduced them to uncertainty. The crew, evidently contented with their prize, soon left the place, and brought their captive on board the sloop-of-war. He remonstrated in vain against the outrage.

"We want men, sir," said the captain, "and you ought not, in time of danger, to refuse your services to your country. Complaint is useless: reconcile yourself to your situation with a good grace—if not, we have the means of making you."

The blow he had received, with the vexation

of mind under which he suffered, threw poor Smith into a violent fever, in which he raved against his mistress at one time, and then threatened his rival with vengeance; while those around, accustomed to similar scenes, merely joked at his expence, and told the surgeon, who came to dress the wound in his head, to caulk him, for he had let out enough bilgewater. Gradually sleep, which comes a heavenly messenger to the wretched, whether their sufferings are physical or proceed from the torture of the conscience, or of the memory, or of the mind in any of its numerous eccentricities, plunged him for the time in happy forgetfulness of every thing that had occurred.

For these he had to thank the deliberate malice of Colonel Monteith and his friends, who had induced the captain of the ship to press him into the service, a thing not difficult, as he was their intimate friend, and was stationed on the coast to pick up able-bodied men on arrival from long voyages, perhaps in sight of their native

land. He knew the wants and rules of the service would justify any atrocity.

How any government could expect willing service from seamen subjected to such violence is inconceivable, especially from men so keenly sensible of injury, so tenacious in remembering, and so prone to avenge it. The consequences were not immediately apparent; but they came with all the force of a blow, withheld till it was the right time to inflict it; and the mutinies that twice broke out in the navy, when the enemy was about to pounce upon us, and the numbers of British seamen fighting against their country under American colours, were but the just retribution of our violent system of impressment, alarming the nation for its safety, and wounding its pride where most vulnerable. Never, we may now perhaps trust, will such injustice be committed again, nor the confidence of our brave seamen in their country's honour be destroyed, whose very prejudices, from a feeling for their simple and honest character, should be consulted and even deferred to.

Miss Ashfield had indeed seen Smith, and Colonel Monteith had seen him also, and was resolved to put in practice a scheme he had for some time meditated, but which the affair with Smith hurried on to its disgraceful conclusion. By putting on, at intervals, the same air of offended affection, he so far overcame her caution, and so alarmed Mrs. Ostertoun's fears, that he might be lost altogether as a husband for her niece, that Miss Ashfield consented to take a drive in his carriage; and it was on this very occasion that she saw Smith. She was aware Monteith saw him also, from the sudden start he made. The recollections of both were not of a kind that either would communicate.

Silent and confused they sat till after travelling one or two miles Miss Ashfield proposed to drive home; but such was not Colonel Monteith's intention; he had ordered the coachman to proceed a distance of twenty miles to his own residence. In vain the young lady now entreated and now threatened him. He told her plainly she must go with him and be his—that

he would immediately marry her, and afterwards the whole affair could be explained to Mr. Ostertoun. She was frightened and yet doubtful how to act, till at a late hour the carriage drew up at a large house, one of Colonel Monteith's residences.

Miss Ashfield had resolved to appeal to the first party she met for assistance and protection in the extraordinary circumstances in which she was; but this wish Colonel Monteith had guarded against by the journey, for the last hour, having been made along a bye road. His own servants she next thought of appealing to; but even this he foresaw and provided for. He had conveniently ready a creature of his own, who lived by the vices of others, to personate for the time a clergyman, and go through the ceremony of a marriage, to which she trusted in the absence of a single one to advise her, but on the solemn protestations of Monteith that it was binding, and that they were only making a runaway match. He promised to explain every thing to Mrs. Ostertoun's satisfaction, with whose tacit

consent he even pretended the whole had been done.

But in a few days Miss Ashfield found herself treated not as a wife but a mistress. In horror at the thought of this degradation, she made her escape and contrived to reach Mr. Ostertoun's. He had returned home only to receive this cruel blow, which for the time scattered all his worldly projects to the winds. When his poor niece presented herself she was so changed by the few days of mental agony she had undergone, that he started in inexpressible alarm at the sight. To upbraid her in such a situation neither Mr. Ostertoun nor his wife would do, as both knew the encouragement and facilities they had unfortunately given to Monteith; and Mr. Ostertoun immediately perceived, after hearing his niece's account of the matter, which she gave with many tears and pauses, that the marriage prevented an investigation before a magistrate into the violence. He was now too old to call Monteith to account personally, which at one time he would have been prompt to do, but as

he was persuaded his niece was married to him, he had an account of the whole affair laid before a lawyer, who assured him it was so. Proceedings were at once begun in the Ecclesiastical Court to have her rights settled. Monteith, to avoid disagreeable communications or explanations, immediately after went to the continent; but he denied there was any marriage, treating it as an affair of gallantry, in which he said the lady was a willing consenter, and instructed the suit to be defended. He was in reality a cold heartless man, who now employed legal chicanery with the methodical confidence of a lawyer, to get quit of a moral and even legal obligation.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LORD LYNDALE had been so well pleased with Mr. Quivox's conversation on the evening when he met Mr. Princeton and disclosed his views on the National Debt, that he invited him to give his tenants and the inhabitants of Lyndale a lecture on their various relations to society and to their landlord, in which also he promised, at the special suggestion of his lordship, to touch on the duty of paying rents punctually, as the surest means of maintaining a friendly intercourse betwixt tenant and landlord.

Mr. Quivox was highly flattered by this testimony of his lordship's approbation; and they both happened to be of one mind on the subject

of rent, for Mr. Quivox was himself a landlord, though his estate was small compared with Lord Lyndale's; in fact, as its name in some degree indicated, it was an upland territory, extending into an immense moor or table land, where the water collected from springs, or by the decay of ancient forests, and the formation of bogs, had no exit, but formed several extensive lochs, around the margin of which no tree was to be seen, nor any shrub, but the brown heather, beneath which was nothing but turf without soil and dry shingle, or failing these a deep moss, from which the people of the district were accustomed to obtain fuel. In early life Mr. Quivox attempted agriculture, before attaching himself to political economy; but his endeavours to bring Quivoxmuirhead into an arable state entirely failed, and were attended even with considerable loss. Around the margin of his estate there was indeed a fringe of cultivation, where the ground though ascending, in some degree admitted it, and where scanty crops of oats were produced, whose green colour in

September might have made an agriculturist from other climates imagine there was a perpetual spring on Quivoxmuirhead. All the rest was strayed over by the flocks of his tenants, which found a scanty subsistence among the heather.

With one of these tenants Mr. Quivox, previously to his introduction to Lord Lyndale, unfortunately got into a dispute about rent; the tenant was somewhat irregular in his payments, pretending amongst other excuses the sterility of his farm. Quivox received such sums as he was able to pay, assuring him that the land would improve under his cultivation, as his style was so superior in all respects to his neighbours (the tenant was a stranger); but immersed in his favourite science, Mr. Quivox had not kept accurate accounts, and the tenant was not interested in doing so; he had receipts from Mr. Quivox which enabled him to maintain with some plausibility that his landlord had been paid, and no arrear existed. Upon this the parties joined issue in court, and the tenant was

found not to be debtor to Mr. Quivox, while in addition the latter was adjudged to pay a heavy sum of costs, created entirely, as the judge decided, from the obstinacy with which Mr. Quivox contested points of law set at rest by decisions in similar questions, or Acts of Parliament, but which Mr. Quivox had insisted should give way to views that occurred to himself.

Smarting under this infliction, Mr. Quivox was in a condition to give Lord Lyndale's tenants a lecture on the subject of rents; and indeed it was with alacrity that on the day fixed when Mr. Quivox should deliver it, he prepared to attend at the village school-house, which had been selected as best suited for the occasion. It was a market day, and there was thus a probability of a large audience.

Mr. Quivox was about to leave Lord Lyndale's residence, in company with his steward, (for his lordship, wisely conjecturing he should secure more respect by remaining unseen, and receiving the homage of the lecturer and his audience from a distance, did not accompany them), when a

letter was put into Quivox's hands, intimating that as he had failed to pay the costs awarded against him, a warrant had been issued for his arrest, which would be executed that very afternoon.

Mr. Quivox was placed in a most unpleasant predicament on receipt of this letter; for on the one hand, by not lecturing, he should certainly disoblige his Lordship, and disappoint his audience; and on the other he incurred the imminent danger of arrest, from which he was yet in time to withdraw, till he could command the money. To pay the debt was at the time inconvenient, and besides, he had not determined if he should do so, notwithstanding the decision, so unfounded did it appear. While standing in difficulty and dismay, his Lordship's phaeton was driven round, and the steward, who had no suspicion of the unpleasant terms of the letter, with much respect, handed Mr. Quivox to the vehicle.

When soldiers must fight, they often rush on to bring the combat to a speedy issue; and this

has the double advantage, of giving evidence of their own audacity, and of discomposing the minds of their enemies. 'Tis making a virtue of necessity; and that line is mostly the victor, that can brag the longest, which indeed is proved by the admission of the most experienced soldiers. Mr. Quivox, therefore, animated by a similar feeling, and trusting to his own countenance, and the favor of his hearers, to carry him triumphantly through any danger approaching from the author of the letter, boldly proceeded to the school-room. His mind, however, at setting out digressed, and in the course of the drive continued to wander from the subject on which he had engaged to lecture; nor could he by any effort, though he knew what was expected of him, tame down his imagination and judgment to so dry and matter of fact a theme.

The room was filled to overflowing with farmers, housekeepers, farm servants, colliers from some pits that were near, and the carters who were employed by them, two or three bargemen, and a sprinkling of women and boys, all

attracted by the fame of Mr. Quivox, which had attained a wide circulation by the exertions of Lord Lyndale's steward, and by an assurance of hearing something for their advantage.

At his entrance he was received, as is usual, with vociferous applause, which was all the louder and heartier, on account of the pure health and spirits of those assembled. Mr. Quivox, bowed, and his own spirits rose with the occasion, as he pulled off his hat, and took his place at the desk. But his valour and confidence, with the unrelenting hatred he bore to the judge of the case betwixt him and his tenant, and the threat which was held out so suddenly upon that judgment entirely banished from his mind the uninteresting topic he meant to speak on, substituting in its place a flow of ideas which could be traced, however, to the letter that was put into his hands just at setting out. He proceeded thus:

"My Friends,—There is no occupation in my judgment so useful as yours—nor, I believe, any more honourable, none certainly is there more

ancient; for from the expulsion of our first parents, that we all have read of, it has been followed by the great body of the people. And reason there is for its being held both useful and honourable, since it gives the means of sustenance to all the rest of mankind, who are engaged in trade and manufactures, and to many who are not so engaged. It would be vain to attempt to note the varieties of the latter description of men; they are too numerous in every country. But with your leave I shall particularize a few. There are lawmakers and lawyers, men not engaged in the labouring of the earth, nor in trade or manufactures, but engaged in attending to the affairs and property and disputes of their neighbours.

"These are men who reap where they have not sown—I mean as it were by metaphor, or comparison, or parable; for, in reality, they reap a plentiful harvest from the troubles they sow and nurture—the wrong advice they give—the blunders they commit at the expense of society, and of you, my friends, among the rest. You will

have observed that they never employ themselves in mending the morals, or improving the condition of the labouring man; or making any laws for his benefit; their whole time is consumed in obtaining laws made to regulate and dispose of the property of others, or in settling some insignificant point regarding them, which seems uncertain from the laws they have got made; and such a point they contrive, in the end, to render important by the time they give to it, and which they insist upon being paid for, according to their own estimate of its value. A prodigious number of such points they find out, all affecting the property of the rest of the community, in the course of a short time; and these they immediately pass through their courts, which may be called mills for grinding the public; and each of the points increases in consequence as it rolls on, so that if you were to believe them, the very existence of you, and myself, and of the whole of mankind besides, depended on its right determination. And after all it is mostly wrong determined, and yet society is not dissolved; not

one of you knew anything about it; and you have been in the midst of danger, if you believe them, while all the time unconscious of your situation. But then they say they were caring for you, and it is better not to alarm the patient with a knowledge of his peril; and after they have discovered it is over, you are overwhelmed by them with felicitations. There is, however, one other party that for the benefit of his country has been more immediately engaged, who is not out of danger, and is not congratulated by the lawyers; I mean the man for whose especial benefit they have raised one or the other of these points. He is in the midst of danger after the point is determined; its determination rightly may have saved his country, as they profess, but he finds his troubles only increasing, and he sinks at last under the weight of the expense, which the lawyers have accumulated, in carrying forward the point to a decision. I am, myself, my friends, one of those threatened to be pounced upon by these harpies; but I see the faces of good, honest men, around me; who

would not willingly admit their ugly heads in this meeting."

At this remark, the audience gave a shout of approbation, which told the lecturer he had not thrown his eloquence away.

"Again, my friends, there is another class who labour not usefully, and yet eat the fruits of your labour, like the lawyers: I mean doctors of all kinds, whether the physician with his gold-headed cane and chariot, or the apothecary with his pestle and pill-box. These men are continually engaged in finding out, that the most of men, women, and children are in ill health; as if nature delighted in producing the race of man infected with disease, and as if doctors were born to ward off its effects. These men are nearly as noxious as the lawyers; for I except such as practice surgery, which is an experimental and useful art, entitled to receive some of that respect, which is due to the exact, and yet universal science which I myself profess.

"There is yet a third class of doubtful la-

bourers: I mean the race of tax-gatherers and of those things that are called duties, a numerous, pertinacious, pressing, insatiable crew. These duties they speak of are, as you know by experience, not the duties you were enjoined to perform towards parents or children. They are money-dues which they cannot show, and only pretend you are under an obligation to pay. But I need not describe them or their works to you more carefully. Now my view in this part of political economy is, to do away with all these three sets of practitioners, and to make good workmen of them, engaging all of them in labouring the ground, so that, like the Apostle Paul, they may win their bread with their own hands, and be burdensome to none.

"I expect much obloquy, many reproaches, for my views on this part of my science; for one will say you are a democrat and a leveller, another that you are ignorant and unskilled, and a third that you are wicked and republican, and all will unite to continue the yoke by means of which they live. But I fear not names and

despise reproaches in the cause of truth. You, my friends, are the salt of the earth: these others are thorns and brambles, which should be gathered together, and be devoted to illuminate the cause of political science. And truly has the poet said, ' The proper study of mankind is man:' in which study I have been engaged for years, and have introduced to your notice one or two points, as the lawyers say, out of the many that so much engage my thoughts."

The audience had listened with great attention to the novel and extraordinary doctrines propounded, and the steward, who expected a discourse on rent, was confounded by Mr. Quivox's democracy and general absurdity. The Economist again was pleased to find that his lecture had been approved from the murmurs of applause that attended a pause.

" My friends," he continued, " you must learn to regard these three sets of men as no labourers, but as drones in the industrious hive which the labouring bees should expel or exterminate; and as you will expect me, perhaps, to point out the

mode of accomplishing this desirable result, or at least of reducing them to depend like yourselves on useful labour, and although my science deals with universals for the most part, and is too grand to descend often to the minuteness of particular results, I will, by way of practical conclusion, afford you some hints on that also."

At this period of the lecture a slight disturbance took place, arising from the entrance of several strangers; and there was a momentary pause. The lecturer was proceeding. "The first class I spoke of were the lawyers, and the mode in which—"

Here Mr. Quivox was interrupted by one of the strangers walking deliberately up to the desk, and arresting him upon the warrant for the costs. He at once perceived the extent of his danger, and called out, "Behold against my own person the acts familiar to the class of whose disposal I was about to speak. In your presence they come to seize me for the costs of trying one of their points, which any of your

little children could have set right in a few minutes, and which they have set wrong and want to be paid for doing so."

The officer insisted on Mr. Quivox stopping his lecture and coming down, and called on his assistants to step forward and remove him. They advanced, on the order, but found its execution impossible. The audience were resolved to prevent the arrest, and pushed and jostled the officers, one of whom, as his patience became exhausted, struck a disciple of Mr. Quivox who was more than usually pressing. On this, the strong and rude colliers seized the officers, and handed them over each other's heads to the door, amidst jeers and laughter; and they would have done the same had the force been much more respectable than it was.

Mr. Quivox, who thought fit, even though the enemy had been driven off, to leave the chair, was, on descending the little staircase, received by the audience with open arms, and borne on their shoulders from the scene.

"He has spoken the truth at last," said one:

"We must on no account desert him," said another:

"We should have choked those fellows, as the best means of getting quit of them," said a third.

Mr. Quivox, on leaving his friendly and delighted hearers, promised to conclude the lecture by deducing the practical conclusions, on an early day; but in consequence of the disagreeable interruption that had occurred, he said he must postpone them.

He immediately entered the phaeton and drove to Lord Lyndale's, who was as much astonished as his steward at the strange turn which the affair had taken.

The disappointed and crest-fallen officer and assistants returned to their employers, and an investigation was commenced to discover the violent men who interfered and prevented the due course of lawful authority. But again, as usual, as none of the active perpetrators of the

outrage could be distinguished and identified, and Mr. Quivox had personally made no resistance, the enquiry came to nothing; and the people were well pleased with the practical use which they had themselves made of the Economist's lecture.

CHAPTER XIX.

"If I wait longer enjoying the pleasure of your society, Captain Kirkwood, I shall be too late for the meeting of the Friends to-night," said Mr. Quivox, towards the conclusion of an entertainment, which the Captain had provided at a favorite haunt.

"Nay, for that matter, it is not much you can do at the meeting," said the Captain; "here is good wine, a comfortable fire, a ready landlord. Would you exchange these for a cold hall in a dark close of the old town, and the colder speeches of the Friends, as you call them?"

"Ah!" replied Quivox, "these are good, very.

good indeed, but I mean to enlighten our friends."

"Your friends, if you please, Mr. Quivox," hastily rejoined the Captain; "they are no friends of mine. I serve King George, and live by him, and I may chance to find enemies among your friends, for I understand they wish to dispense with my services altogether, on the ground of the universal brotherhood of the human race. Now, curse me! if I can call a Mounseer brother, and he is no true born Briton who will do so."

"Captain Kirkwood," said Quivox, after taking a pinch of snuff from his silver box, and replacing it with much complacency in his breast pocket, "I will not dispute this, though perhaps I could offer reasons contrary to your views; as the results of my noble science tend in a direction opposite to them, but these lie at such a distance, and mankind, with their wars, and guns, and bayonets bristling against each other, are so averse from, or incapable of, comprehending such conclusions, that I hope on for the time,

and leave them to a future stage, and so decline this argument."

"Sir," said the Captain, upon whom the wine had made some innovation, "there is no result that can end wars. The scriptures tell us that we have had them of old time, as we shall continue to have them till doomsday."

"Well, well," said Quivox, "let us not dispute about this, for I mean not to touch on it, particularly at the meeting. But all are friends there—brothers united in a holy league for the regeneration of mankind."

"The regeneration," said Kirkwood, "seems to proceed by sharp means in France just now. What say you to forty or fifty brothers losing their heads of a morning in Paris, and all because they differ from the headsmen upon the means of regeneration?"

"That," said Quivox, "arises from the necessity of producing uniformity of views upon such important topics; for when the fate of a nation is concerned, the subtraction of a few pugnacious spirits from the multitude is merely

a purging of the ill humours that affect so great a body, and not deserving of serious consideration. Strong medicine is necessary to cure an ill-conditioned patient; and France will emerge from her present troubles with renovated vigour, cleared of the thousand evils which long ages of misgovernment had occasioned. But you must at least hear the discussion of the evening. I promise you an entertainment composed of charity and love for all mankind; and you will have the advantage of departing instructed on an important head of the grandest of sciences, for I mean to introduce it this evening to the notice of the meeting."

"To oblige you," said Kirkwood, "I may go, especially as, being in plain clothes, I shall not stir up the ire of your bulls by an exhibition of red cloth; but you will bear me witness, I go only as a hearer, for my friends up in the castle yonder have little sympathy with your 'band of brothers.'"

Having settled the matter in this way, they left the tavern and went down one of the wynds

to the hall. It was filled, even crowded, with men, whose imaginations had been wrought on by the stirring events in France, many of whom wished to take a short cut to fame and fortune, from both of which they must be for ever debarred in the ordinary routine of human affairs.

It is not undeserving of remark, that no great or commanding mind ever lives through troubled and dangerous times, when actions and opinions, founded on a reasonable appreciation of the grounds which produce the contest of parties are adhered to, or continue to be steered by, as the light from afar that should guide the toiling agitators. Such minds seem to be called into a brief existence, for the purpose of producing the inferior and interested spirits, and then sink into darkness and die. Hampden kindled the fire, and set the cauldron a boiling, and then perished, leaving its contents to be distributed by others, as he would not have done. Lafayette introduced liberal ideas of government into France from America, and was very soon superseded and silenced.

There is in reality no enduring principle of rectitude and honesty in mankind, either collectively or individually, in the progress of revolutions. All is at the risk of the changing current of circumstances. Men then are found, who, from vanity, from love of fame, from pride, will forget, for the time, the rank in which they have been born, and the honours of their ancestors, to mix on an equality with the humblest of their party; and humble men are then too found, from similar motives, to imitate virtues alien from their former life, to abstain from riot and plunder in the midst of temptations. But this is not lasting: rank resumes its influence, and spurns the vulgar; and the vulgar will a few hours afterwards commit some petty theft, or other action, at variance altogether with the lofty spirit which for a little had animated them. It is in the moral as in the natural world. There is nothing stable, nothing sure, nothing good, nothing lovely, nothing of good report, accomplished by sudden and violent efforts. By slow degrees the oak rears its lofty trunk in the

forest; the structure that lasts for ages is raised upon laboriously laid foundations; and by a similar process all that is just, truthful, honest, faithful, grows up in the souls of individuals and of nations. Such considerations had been omitted by the Revolutionists in France and Reformers in Britain, who would pull every thing down, and build in a day a constitution on their own model.

But, not to pursue reflections, now more obvious by the experience of half a century, it is time to attend to Mr. Quivox. His appearance was sufficient to entitle Captain Kirkwood to a seat, whom, however, he immediately left to appear in the body of the hall. The usual speeches were delivered, condemning all existing institutions in the state, while each speaker had his own plan cut and dry for their complete re-construction. Republican virtues were extravagantly praised, and all the recent measures in France were spoken of as worthy of admiration and of imitation.

Mr. Princeton was an active member, and held in great respect by the meeting. He sat silent, astonished at the variety of opinions, the extravagance of the measures proposed compared with the means possessed of carrying them into execution; and he was fully aware that the speakers were destroying any chance of a moderate reform by promulgating designs which the wealthier and better classes would unite to resist. But he allowed the scum to rise to the top and overflow; and when something like reason had resumed the control over rancour and complaint, he proceeded shortly to address the meeting, recalling to their attention that the principal object was to effect a reform of the House of Commons, so as to make that house not represent the aristocracy, or in other words itself, but really represent the nation, and to this their efforts should be directed. The more moderate men fully concurred with him, though few in number.

Mr. McKitterick had become a member of the association, having constituted himself a deputa-

tion from the United Irishmen, which was enough at once to secure acceptance and admission.

He was a fervid and impassioned orator, after the manner of his country, and scarcely allowed Mr. Princeton to conclude, till he was on his legs to propose a union of all the reformers and republicans in Scotland, Ireland, and France.

"We have," said he, "the glorious example before us, of our brothers in Paris; and shall we hesitate to follow in their footsteps? They have willed it, and they are free. Tyranny has fled from their land, to the congenial countries of kings and despots. Equality and fraternity are the watchwords of the Republic, and sound to us from afar across the deep, that each man in Britain must be a free, and enlightened citizen, and all linked together in a holy brotherhood of common rights. All will then be equal, differences of rank being abolished; and with equality we shall drive poverty and aristocracy from our shores. The United Irishmen will be proud to hail you as brothers, and you will swell the ranks

of our thousands of gallant patriots, all ready to strike for old Ireland."

This speech suited the taste of a part of the members much better than Mr. Princeton's moderation; but before McKitterick's motion could be seconded, Mr. Quivox stood up.

It was to be observed of the Economist that though he called his science the most comprehensive and exact of all sciences, he was continually falling into contradictions and irreconcilable conclusions. This he never admitted, but openly and generally accused his antagonists of not having studied it, and not being prepared for investigating the subject of dispute. It is not necessary to find out an explanation of such conduct; it will be enough, at present, to notice the fact.

He was dressed in his ordinary brown coat, with its large tin buttons—like dollars; yellow waistcoat, drab breeches, white stockings, with silver buckles to his shoes. He looked in florid health; his voice was slow and sonorous; and

his manner, altogether, indicated unfaltering confidence.

"The gentleman from Ireland," he said, "proposes to banish poverty from the land; and there is no country where that is so desirable as in his own."

"I will have no reflection, by jappers, against ould Ireland," interrupted Mr. McKitterick.

"I mean none," calmly proceeded Mr. Quivox, "but only wish to show how the pauperism of every country may be at once annihilated, and all men and women made self-supporting. It one head of many in my favourite science, on which I shall state my views to this assembly; and it comes home to every man, for of what use are political rights if we want bread." "Hear, hear," was cried by a hundred voices, and "that is the point indeed."

"Well, gentlemen," resumed Mr. Quivox, "I presume all will acknowledge that our first duty is to take care of ourselves individually and collectively. Our government, as it now is, may boast of having continents and islands all over

the world; of fleets and armies to preserve their possessions, or to fight all the nations on earth; may boast of courts of law, which none but the rich can enter, but which I would prevent any one from entering by pulling down. Officials of all kinds paid, not for doing anything that is of utility—governors—ambassadors at every court. But what have the mass of the men of this country to look for from these? Nothing but a continuance and increase of taxes imposed on them, to preserve all those continents, islands, fleets, armies, officials. My plan for annihilating poverty in Britain is simple and direct and tangible. Abandon the continents and islands; sell the ships and guns to those who will buy them; disband the armies; dismiss the ambassadors; shut up courts of law as useless, and make justice cheap; have no men paid extravagantly for doing nothing; and let the whole of the taxes, hitherto thoughtlessly applied to objects in which the people have no interest, and from which they derive no benefit be directed to cultivate our lands, giving em

ployment to all who want it; to improve the dwellings of the working men; to educate the young so as to enable them to use their hands in tillage or trade. If the taxes collected every year are thus applied, we shall not have an able bodied man or woman in Britain willing to work, who shall not be employed at good wages.

" And why should this not be so? If our first care is our country, how do we care for it, if from year to year the people increase and their employment and wages diminish? In the midst of splendour they are ill housed and ill clad—in the midst of glory they are miserable. The good or ill condition of a country must appear from the condition of the great body of the people; but if that is bad while enormous sums are wrung from them every year, to be expended always on the same useless objects, are we not to be accused of attending to every thing else, except the condition of our own countrymen, of our parents, brothers, sisters, children, and neighbours, of our own flesh and blood.

Let there be an end of the false and fraudulent doctrine, that there must be always poor in the land. There must be poor, if by age, or youth, or disease, some cannot work; but there must not, and previous to the conquests of continents and islands, and the creation of the tax-consuming armies, navies, and others I have mentioned—there was not, I say, a single able-bodied man in the country without work. To the old system we should return. The wisdom of our ancestors recognised no good to their country in expending its strength in colonies, fleets, armies, ambassadors, and drones legal and official. Let us recur to it. Let the taxes be kept at home, and applied to employ and pay our own deserving people."

Here Mr. Quivox concluded, to the amazement and anger of Captain Kirkwood, to whom he had stated, that he would not argue on the subject of armies, but leave it to some future occasion; and Mr. Princeton, who well remembered the matters discussed at Lord Lyndale's, and the general tone of asperity with which Mr.

Quivox had then treated all alterations of the constitution, was astonished at the views he propounded on pauperism and its cure, which were as novel as some of those that had been expressed in the meeting on Reform, and at as great a distance from probable execution. But the speech was received with applause, for it came home to the understandings of a number of the audience; and this applause had the effect of greatly increasing the vanity of Mr. Quivox: it could not increase his confidence in the correctness and consistency of his science.

A small but active man, who was an intense admirer of the new state of affairs in France, now rose to address the meeting. His name was Thomas Arnold, and he had lately arrived from London, to assist the inexperience of the Scotch Reformers. He said that Mr. Quivox had forgot, that they were not the government, and had no immediate influence over it. "Our business at present is, to mould the government of this country as the people's wishes indicate; and then the gentleman will have an opportunity

of laying his plans regarding pauperism before it with some chance of being listened to."

Mr. Quivox had returned to the place where Captain Kirkwood sat, totally unconscious that he could have displeased him, and his whole manner spoke this so plainly that Kirkwood could not find in his heart to express what he felt. It contributed somewhat to this that the English delegate's few words seemed calculated to dispose of Mr. Quivox's views in a simple and obvious manner. Quivox whispered the Captain, that the principles of his science were no wise affected by governments or forms of constitution of whatever nature, but were fitted for all times, countries, and governments, being of universal application.

And after a few words from some others of the members, he was about to reply, when the President, Mr. Mitchell, who saw clearly that the London deputy was in the right, informed Mr. Quivox that his speech had been irrevelant, and that through forbearance he had too long been permitted to engage the attention

of the meeting. Quivox, in silence, rose up and withdrew, followed in the greatest haste by the Captain, to whom neither the atmosphere of the place nor the doctrines promulgated in it, had given the smallest satisfaction, unless it were that the sudden and unceremonious manner of silencing the Economist afforded him a very great relief.

"Pearls before swine, Captain," he said, on reaching the street, "but the truths of my science are too sublime for such a crew."

"Come, come," said the Captain, "recollect I have borne your disbanding the army and dismantling the navy, with equanimity. Let me entreat you to dismiss all choler at the pert forwardness of that white-faced opponent, and the president of the association, who afforded him countenance: and I know you never entertain a lasting resentment. I must positively wash away the dust and heat with a glass of sherry; so come with me, my friend."

The Economist did not refuse Kirkwood's offer, and consoled himself by the way in medi-

tating upon his own profound knowledge, and the comparative ignorance of almost all men he had chanced to encounter of different views from himself on any part of his science. This happy disposition enabled him to recover from many an apparent defeat, and to neglect many a strong argument. He declared again and again to Kirkwood, that all with whom he had conversed, and who had ventured to differ from him, were mere school-boys in his science, whom he could allow to talk from a thorough perception of their imbecility.

A few glasses of wine were drunk at a neighbouring tavern to their mutual satisfaction. Captain Kirkwood insisted on seeing Mr Quivox home to his lodgings, where he left him somewhat elevated with the wine he had taken, which had assisted in confirming him in his own superiority to the rest of the world.

CHAPTER XX.

Mr. Mitchell, who approved of the remarks made on Mr. Quivox's speech at the evening meeting of the Convention, had secured not only the respect of Mr. Arnold, but of almost all the members on several occasions. Arnold was early introduced to him, and saw good reason to admire his capacity.

On particular inquiry he found Mr. Mitchell was not long returned from France, as, indeed, in some degree appeared from his dress, which was in the newest fashion of republican simplicity. He was about thirty-five, and of a mild and pleasing aspect. His hair, which was black, was

drawn back, and collected into a cue or pigtail, which hung down his neck behind. His blue coat, breeches, and white stockings were distinguished for purity and scrupulous neatness.

Whether from accident or in imitation of the great French philosophers and demagogues, he admired flowers, as if the sweetest and most beautiful of nature's inanimate children were to infuse their own qualities into the hearts and actions of the apostles of fraternity and equality, and wore constantly in his breast some captive from the flower garden, of which he was hardly less enamoured than the Rector of Weston-Favell himself.

His voice was soft, persuasive, equal, sustained; his action in speaking never violent, and his temper, often tried, scarce ever appeared to give way, or lose its habitual calmness, so that he seemed to remember or be under the guardianship of some seraphic being, who, beckoning onwards, led him away from the passions of an inferior and vulgar world.

It was not easy to know him and not to love

him, if a total absence of self, if a generally clear and sound judgment, but on one point, if an unimpeachable private life, if honesty of purpose are qualities, as surely they are, which command the respect and affection of mankind. In another age he might have been a martyr for religion, but he was given to that of which we write, to hold up the torch of liberty and fraternity, kindled at their altar in Paris.

It was of no importance to such a man that he was informed an eye was kept on his actions, and hands were employed noting his words to be used against him. Taking his stand on these natural rights, which formed a subject for constant reference, and were so much lauded by the Revolutionists, he was prepared and indeed recommended his hearers to obtain every political right by means of persuasion, and reason, and argument; but he did not stop there: he added if the time should come when all these having been tried were found unavailing, then recourse must be had to other remedies, some of which

he suggested, and others he was preparing to suggest at the proper occasion.

Even Princeton and Arnold were startled by the tendency of such remarks, openly expressed, not so much on principle, as from a feeling for Mr. Mitchell's personal safety, and Mr. Princeton resolved himself, and commissioned Mr. Arnold to take the first opportunity that presented itself, privately to warn their too daring friend of his danger, and endeavour to obtain some assurance of more cautious language in future meetings of the Convention.

An occasion soon occurred, for Mr. Mitchell invited Arnold to be of a party to spend the afternoon at his house, which, to cultivate his passion for flowers and natural objects, was situated in a large garden on the south of the city.

Arnold, on reaching the place, found his friend pacing up and down the walks, in that extremity of republican simplicity and neatness of dress which he so much affected. Several foreign

strangers of either sex, and one or two members of the Convention (amongst whom were Mr. Jeremiah Dobie and Mr. Quivox), had been invited. The foreign gentlemen were of the philosophic revolutionary class, which had representatives in most large towns at the time.

Mr. Mitchell, on seeing Arnold, advanced and welcomed him with the politeness of a Frenchman, and Arnold waived the subject of Mr. Princeton's commission till they had made an inspection of the whole garden, and till he had exhausted every compliment at his command in commendation—and justly—of so beautiful a retreat.

Mr. Mitchell was so much engaged, or, indeed, absorbed in the beauties of the external world, of which he said no change of fortune or storm of the political sky could deprive him, that Arnold felt unwilling to intrude upon his happy frame of mind. At last, however, he was, in performance of his promise to Princeton, obliged to observe that the cares of the world would force themselves even upon a philosopher's

notice, as Mr. Quivox himself would be ready to admit.

Mitchell smiled, and immediately added—

"No doubt we both ride our hobbies, nor will I pretend that your hint may not have some spice of truth in it too."

Arnold hastened to assure him he was guiltless of having classed him with such a wild speculator as that gentleman; "but, Mr. Mitchell, your friends, and I as one, if you will allow me that honour,—"Mitchell bowed—"think yon are incurring great danger by some of your late speeches; more especially as they are on the watch, who will be but too ready to turn what both you and myself say to an evil account. Not that we disapprove of your opinions, or would withdraw ourselves from any danger, but discretion is necessary."

Mr. Mitchell replied:

"I have heard and seen too much in Paris to be under any apprehension. I am ready to say and do much more, and to undertake all the responsibility. Well do I know the character of the

courts of law in Britain, and well that of the hired agents of government in this country. Under the name of sedition, or some other unmeaning or undefined law term, they will endeavour to prevent the assertion of the inalienable rights of mankind. But I mean to defy all such attempts, and to persist in the course I have hitherto pursued. Imprison or banish me they may, or even offer me the crown of martyrdom. For all I am prepared, and nothing shall hinder me from asserting my opinions or defending them on all occasions; yet I am obliged to you and my friends; I am grateful to you; but your solicitude is thrown away. Let us then drop that part of our argument and resume our meditations on the flowers; or stay, you will come into the house to read my last letters from Paris. They are, indeed, progressing there, and sweeping away the rubbish which has choked up the stream of liberty. Their progress cries shame upon our slowness and doubt."

Arnold felt all remonstrance further would be useless, and might, in the eyes of such a man,

be mistaken for unfaithfulness, or change of opinion, or fear; to none of which would Arnold's bold character ever submit. He stopped in his admonitions before the enthusiast could fasten, if he had been willing, which was at least doubtful, any of these epithets upon him; and indeed on reading the letters, such was the apparent success that then had crowned the efforts of the French Republican leaders; so reasonable did their views on many points appear, that he partook of some portion of the same enthusiastic spirit that animated Mitchell; and admitted that there was nothing yet done which was contrary to law or strict justice.

Mr. Mitchell was gratified by his friend's independence; and on returning to the company, they found also Mr. Princeton. Mitchell was happy indeed to see that gentleman his guest, and introduced him to the strangers. Mr. Arnold took an opportunity of whispering to Mr. Princeton that he had executed his commission; but that all advice was thrown away, and he needed not himself therefore approach

the subject. Princeton sighed at the information; but was not surprised; he expected it, and said he loved the single-heartedness of the man, and would not desert him, nor refuse any consequence to which his bold language might lead.

The repast was good; it was even elegant and Parisian; but there was none of the usual consumption of wine or toddy, that distinguishes Britons from all the world, as much as their independent insular position, much to the dissatisfaction of Mr. Jeremiah Dobie, who, though a religious and moral man, was favourable to an unlimited allowance of whisky punch, and was disappointed if the bowl did not grace the festive board. Mr. Mitchell and his foreign friends were unostentatiously temperate.

After a cup of light wine, and very soon after dinner, coffee was served in the Parisian fashion, in an alcove or glass summer-house, well furnished with sofas and tables, and the usual equipage; for Mr. Mitchell, though he knew it

was impossible to have the bright sky of France, was desirous to please the strangers by reminding them of their country.

Mr. Dobie was not merely disappointed, but scandalised, and held up his hands in amazement when one of the monsieurs talked of Sunday with its morning mass in Paris, and assured him music, concerts, and dancing, the theatre, the opera, and card playing were the Sunday recreations in *la belle* France.

"Sinful and miserable creatures these mounseers are," he said, addressing Mr. Arnold. "You hear that one say, how they pass Sunday in France."

"Well," said Arnold, "it might be passed to better purpose; but it is no worse than getting drunk on that day, the too common practice of Scotland."

"Sir, it is not the common practice," said Mr. Dobie somewhat sharply.

"Well, but it is too frequent, and in my view," said Arnold, "it is worse than playing cards or joining in a musical concert."

Mr. Dobie, if he had been a papist, would have crossed himself, but as he was a sound Protestant, he heard Mr. Arnold's opinions with increasing astonishment and disgust, and he began to fear Mr. Mitchell participated in the same errors, as he, too, heard the Frenchman's words without expressing any surprise; but Mr. Quivox, he was sure, thought differently, though he was unable to get near him.

In reality Mr. Quivox considered all games, music, and cards as harmless, but unworthy to occupy his attention. He was placed in the summer-house beside a very beautiful and attractive French lady, and did all in his power to entertain her; though, as he understood but little French, and she no English, the lady's eyes and enchanting smiles were called so much into requisition as nearly to upset his devotion to science; at least (for that could hardly be) to make him temporarily forget it. His fat figure and rubicund face seemed to have a surprising effect on the stranger; the brown coat and even its huge buttons, each brilliant as a star, were

admired and touched by her fair hands, till the Economist was altogether beside himself with fervent admiration of her winning manner.

But his attentions to the lady, as well as her coquetry, were observed, and at length viewed with jealousy by her own bearded squire and lawful admirer, who was anything but satisfied with what was going forward, and after darting sundry glances of contempt at the dress and manner of his unconscious rival, he enquired of Mr. Princeton, "who him in de brown coat was?" upon which he learned that he was Mr. Quivox, a follower of Quesnay and Turgot, but with views of his own that materially differed from those great masters of political science.

"Me vill teach this Quivox that *les lois de la politesse* not ver well known by him, nor so well as Turgot nor Quesnay. He is *un fanfaron.*"

Mr. Princeton, who had noticed the earnest manner in which Mr. Quivox was engaged with the lady, and the complacency with which she listened to his loud and continuous discourse,

and regarded him, saw at once that Monsieur Pierre Rosilly was affected with jealousy. He was perplexed, and while he remained uncertain how to act, the attentions of Mr. Quivox became fast and furious; for so delighted was he with the lady's graces and smiles, and assents of "*Oui, Monsieur*," to all he said, that in the excitement of the moment, and in awkward imitation of his host's French grace, he rose and seized a large bouquet of flowers in his hard and massive paws, which he advanced to present to the lady.

On this Monsieur Rosilly's jealousy burst all bounds; he rushed forward and took hold of Mr. Quivox before he could present the flowers.

"*Restez vous* dere *non, non.* Me will send *un ami* to challenge you before *demain.* You de *Charlatan Quixot economique et politique.* This, sar, is my Madame."

The lady pretended to be surprised and alarmed, while Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Princeton hastened forward and relieved Mr. Quivox, who now began to have a suspicion that he had been

giving offence by his too familiar advances to his fair auditor; but he protested the lady's politeness, and Mr. Mitchell's example must be his excuse.

"Ah! *Non, non.* Dat will not do. I do challenge this grand *Charlatan* to de mortal combat, *au combat a l'outrance.*"

In spite of his habitual calmness, Mr. Mitchell could not restrain his laughter, and this tended to increase the rage of Monsieur Rosilly. As a last resource he whispered Mr. Princeton to get the innocent Economist away as soon as possible, while he himself drew his enemy aside, and endeavoured to satisfy him that Mr. Quivox was arrived at those years of discretion, when even Madame's charms usually had less effect. This, and more especially the absence of Mr. Quivox, who was led off by Princeton, brought everything to a happy termination. The party continued their game, and the ladies sung the latest airs that the republican mania had produced in Paris, to the delight of Mr. Mitchell, the admiration of Arnold and the contempt of

Mr. Dobie. The politeness, the game, and constant good humour of Mr. Mitchell, tended to produce similar feelings in all, till late in the afternoon; and, except Mr. Dobie, they departed with increased respect for the man.

CHAPTER XXI.

"And did you, Mr. Laurence, really leave the poor thing to the care of Mr. Frankover, yourself it may be a distant relative, at least a friend of his father's family."

This question was addressed by Miss Waldie, sitting in the business-room of his house in Woodport, to an old gentleman, Mr. James Laurence, banker, who had been present at the late Morden's funeral, and joined with the rest in delivering Charles Oliphant to the care of Mr. Frankover. Mr. Laurence was a rich man, precise, formal, methodical, regular as the red lines of his ledger; knew not much beyond its

four corners, the money in his box, and the circumstances of those who wished to borrow it, comprehending the extent and value of their lands and houses, in which kind of knowledge he was exceeded by no man in Woodport, nor for miles around; and it was precisely what was useful to him in his day, way, and generation; for how else should he be able to accept or reject the little bits of paper that bore the promise to repay him at a future time, of so many as came to him and asked the loan of his money on the faith of it? He put little trust in the promise by itself truly, nor in anything but what he judged would be available of real property for its fulfilment.

Mr. Laurence was, on the present occasion, extremely fidgetty under the examination to which Miss Waldie was subjecting him; but she would not be diverted from it; and his bank held a good round sum of the lady's money, which he should have been most unwilling to see transferred from himself to his rival's establishment over the way. Her money, while she was

pleased to allow it, formed part of his stock-in-trade, upon which he could extend his business, by accommodating those who wanted temporary advances, and a serious blow it would have been to have old Doolford's golden idols withdrawn in the heap, from his own banking temple; and that was the consequence a frown on Miss Waldie's generally kind countenance seemed to foreshadow.

There was an imperative obligation imposed by this sense of his own interest to submit to be led as, for the moment, the lady pleased, not that she was thinking such was the cause of his enduring meekness and placidity; she would have scorned to own or accept power so produced, but was believing all the while she saw a man awakened to some sense of his gross selfishness so neglectful of all else.

"Bless me, Miss Waldie, what was I to do? I declare I was just as nothing beside the great folk."

"Do! why, brought him with you."

"You forget, my dear Miss Waldie, I have a

family of my own, which you know I were worse than an infidel to neglect; and though, as you say, there may be some relation of my family to Oliphant's—" Mr. Laurence had been flattered by this accidental recollection of the lady—" there were several there at the time far nearer to him than your poor servant."

" There were, I dare say, there were, from various quarters, the cold-hearted monsters; and, I believed the poor little fellow was safe and comfortable with one of these guardians, upon whom nature and misfortune had given him a claim, and they not to receive him, but leave him to his father's greatest enemy! Mr. Laurence, I say again, you were much to blame."

" Consider, my dear Miss Waldie, my own circumstances—my family."

" I do consider them, and make some allowance, Mr. Laurence; but you cannot be acquitted. Your own conscience I refer you to; ask it. I would have taken the boy with pleasure. What was it to me to do something for the old house and its sole heir in his sad extremity?"

"If I had only known this; but Mr. Frankover—"

"Speak not to me of that traitor to whose cunning the Morden family may charge its ruin. But I must keep some terms with him. You say they committed Charles Oliphant to him—as well a lamb to the mercy of a hungry lion."

"Well, pardon me—it may have been an error. Will you honor Mrs. Laurence and myself with your company this afternoon—only ourselves—she would be so delighted? This pleasure is so rare, she will not excuse me if I omit—"

"No, Mr. Laurence, but make my compliments to her; she would not have acted as you did in this business."

"I will do anything you wish, my dear Miss Waldie; show me how I can assist you. If I had only known, I should have taken charge of the lad myself. I will go even to Mr. Frankover."

"No, sir, I must take Mr. Frankover in my

own hand. I know him, and he understands me, too, I daresay. I will not be defeated by Mr. Frankover. Good morning."

He bowed, and bowed again, as she sailed away from the alarmed banker's door, who remained in a world of perplexity and apprehension. Her insight into human character was acute enough he saw, and was sufficient to make him feel he had not removed the unfavorable impression which his selfishness had produced.

As those men will do who are naturally low-minded and grovelling, he flew to one whose disposition was a contrast to his own, Mrs. Laurence. Her judgment was worth nothing in estimating a man's pecuniary credit, but very accurate in understanding any other kind of merit; and, some how or other, she had at the time fallen into the same view as the other lady, when her husband on his return gave an account of the disposal of Charles Oliphant. But little comfort he now received from her, whose feelings were less alive to money than to mercy.

"Be thankful, James," she said, "that Miss

Waldie has a true and forgiving heart, and you have more reason to rely on that than anything you can now do."

"The ways of women are past finding out;" rejoined her husband, "this old fool, the auctioneer Smart told me, bid against Frankover for a vile daub of the late Morden, till she had it at ten times its value, and was laughed at by every one in the room," in which Mr. Laurence, though he stated the affair as the auctioneer did, was not entirely correct—it was only the auctioneer who laughed, and claimed the sympathy of Mr. Laurence,—"I suppose," he continued, "she did it to spite Mr. Frankover."

"And I suppose no such thing. I have heard my mother say Morden and she were talked of. Might she not wish his picture and to befriend his son?"

"Ah! well, that is new to me. I wish I had known it before."

"Yes; but if you had done—however I will not vex you—but if you had—"

"Well, well, well! I see—woman's mind is inexplicable."

Miss Waldie passed down the street of Woodport, and as it was but seldom indeed she appeared in the little burgh, and was known to have a pretty sum in bank, besides her estate, there was an inclination on the part of one or two to profit by the occasion for the advancement of their own interests, or of the interests they had most at heart, a thought of self being mingled with the respect they really felt for her. It will not do to scrutinize too narrowly men's motives; but the chance of profit and the wealth of the individual will be found perhaps in many instances to contribute as much to the respect that is paid him, as probity and honour. If there could have been one exception it must have been Miss Waldie.

The first she encountered was the Reverend Joseph Deacon, the dissenting minister of the place, who with a smiling countenance took her hand, assured her of the great pleasure he had in seeing her look so well:—

"Would you just step in and see Mrs. Deacon?"

"No, Mr. Deacon, my time will not allow me that pleasure."

"You would be so satisfied with the result of our missionary labours in the South Sea Islands from the latest accounts. It is just come to hand,—the Report containing at length the Reverend Samuel Wauchton's letter. Such toil as he has undergone and so bravely borne—a true soldier of Christ—and the number of intelligent converts is astonishing."

"I must read it, Mr. Deacon. You will be kind enough, perhaps, to send it at your convenience. These our fellow creatures may be brought within the fold. It will be a comfort some time to those who have tried it."

"Most true, my dear Miss Waldie. Would we had more sincere Christians like you! But the providing of books for the school Mr. Wauchton has set up for the young will bear hard on our limited means. You were very liberal last year, Miss Waldie, and we cannot expect you—"

"And so the report is so promising of good. I will continue my subscription, of course; but you may put me down £10 for Mr. Wauchton's school. I will tell Laurence to pay you; and do send me the report. It is a pleasure to see the good that can be done even in distant lands and islands of the sea."

"Madam, I thank you most gratefully; the money will do a vast deal of good. The report I will send out to-morrow morning."

Mr. Deacon was gone but a small way, when the next person she met was Baillie Wogan, the fattest man the town contained, and as good-natured as fat. His humour, too, for he had some, was so free of one particle of cynicism, malignity, or acerbity, and that was proved so directly by his beaming eye and face, that most people who came within range of it were glad to remain under its influence sometimes longer than business and worldly cares permitted—a universal favorite with man, woman, and child, for no unkind word did he use to them, and had something to cause a smile in all.

"Ah, Miss Waldie," as she stretched forth her hand, "it is really a pleasure this—and so seldom. The very day, sun, and sky, and air seem to favour us when you come to the town."

And the Baillie was so far right that it did happen to be a beautiful afternoon; and the children were making the street resound with their noisy cries in little groups at various plays, so that the two could hardly hear each other.

"Well, Baillie—but how is Mrs. Wogan?"

"Oh! well—but you will step in?"

"No; I cannot."

"Cannot! You are as strong as ever I have seen you."

"But, Baillie, I have business in hand."

"And so has the Deil always, but most in a storm, and this is a pretty afternoon."

"I regret much—"

"I am sorry too; and Bell will be disappointed that you pass the door."

"I will call the very next time I come to Woodport."

Here an officer came to inform the Baillie that the Council was met about the new pump well to be made for the supply of water in the Back Lane; and the Baillie knew this very well, for the bell had been sounding for some time from the town steeple.

"Ah! Miss Waldie, we of the Council are most anxious to do good to the poor; but the borough funds are eaten up with so many calls on them, I doubt we must put off this affair of the water supply, and allow the poor just to trudge through the fields with their pitchers to that corner well as their forebears did."

"But, Baillie, the pump can cost so very little."

"Ah! but then there is the sinking of the well. Old Joe won't blast and pick through the rock for nothing."

"Will it be a great convenience to them?"

"A very great—save an hour a day, besides the labour, and the idling of the queans as they go and come, which has scandalised both our minister and Mr. Deacon. They are united about that if about nothing else."

"Well, Baillie, I must help you this time. I like the borough. I mind, but neither of us are young now."

"Oh! age, Miss Waldie, sits as lightly on you as youth on some of my freens."

"Baillie, I will subscribe £5 to the well, and will tell Mr. Laurence."

"My dear madam, I will mention this in the council just now; it will be a pleasing reason to them for my keeping them waiting."

Mr. Wogan made his bow and repaired to the council, rejoiced at this addition to their funds, and congratulating himself on his own success, and the surprise which his communication of the donation would cause to his brethren.

Miss Waldie passed down the street still further, and then entered a close which led to a house, in which Widow Maxwell lived with her two youngest children; the others were grown up and fled, as the young will fly away. The poor widow had been roughly used by the laird, but his sister had redressed that, if perchance it might help him to find forgiveness.

She was overjoyed to see Miss Waldie, who sat down to converse with her; and little Peggy, her youngest child, could not be restrained from running to the stranger, who took her up, smoothed down the child's hair, patted her cheek, and made enquiry after the Toms, Marys, Dicks, Susans of the widow's numerous family, scattered the poor mother hardly knew where. One was at sea—one had enlisted—Susy was married—and Dick—the tear stood in her eye as she waived the latest chapter in his history; and here little Harry came from the baker's with bread, and was honoured with a share of the lady's notice.

"I am just come a little before the time," said Miss Waldie, "but I may be absent when it comes round, and you might not be able to wait. I have brought the quarter's allowance."

"I can only thank you."

"That is enough and more than enough; and I see you are comfortable."

"I am, indeed, thanks to your kindness, and have never sought relief."

"And I hope will not have occasion."

"But I am anxious about my children."

"No doubt; but I think there was more occasion they should mind you."

"I dinna ken—a mither's a mither."

Miss Waldie turned the conversation to the two little ones before her, and asked them one or two questions, which little Peggy answered, and the boy hung round his mother, older and more bashful.

All was neat and comfortable in the widow's abode, which tended further to tranquillize Miss Waldie's temper, not often ruffled, to be sure, but a little so by her conversation with Mr. Laurence.

She took her leave with the widow's blessing, and returned up street where by this time her old fashioned gig with the serving boy were standing at the inn door ready to carry her home. Several of the magnates nodded smilingly to her, which she acknowledged with her usual kindness; their sense of her general merit being increased by the recent donation to the well,

which the baillie had made already known, with sufficient commendation of himself for seizing the opportunity of the meeting so accidental; and Mr. Laurence was there officiously to help her to her seat, though she did not receive his attentions with her general affability. He felt it, and was silent as she drove away.

CHAPTER XXII.

MR. FRANKOVER was in Miss Waldie's neighbourhood, now residing in the mansion House of Morden permanently, and occupying his attention with improvements on the lands, and the management of the affairs of such gentlemen of fortune and estate as confided them to his charge,

No time was lost by Miss Waldie as soon as she resolved how to act, and she did not remain beyond the evening undecided.

A message was sent by her next morning to Mr. Frankover requesting the favor of a call as early as convenient. He tried to draw out of the messenger what Miss Waldie wished to see him about, but he knew nothing; and as he

himself had no idea what her object was, his imagination was occupied in fathoming the designs of the old spinster: she did not mean to employ him professionally, that was settled by a rival candidate being preferred to invest Miss Waldie in the executry and land of her brother; which happened, notwithstanding Mr. Frankover thrust himself as much in the way as his usual boldness dictated; and on the whole he found it much easier to discover what she would not than what she would do.

"It is nothing that can do me any good that she wants me to go to her," he concluded, "I have a mind to decline," and in fact he had half written a note pleading other engagements as an excuse for not obeying her summons, but tore it up, as the mirror of truth and rectitude which she held up, led irresistibly, and by a sort of fascination, even the dark and deceitful to come to her to look at themselves therein, if possible with satisfaction. To stand well in her estimation was something desired, for she did not hesitate to declare her opinions, always in strict

accordance with truth, and by experience these were valued at their worth.

He went, therefore, and on reaching her house was immediately introduced. She was fully prepared for him, and intended to proceed at once to business, as after a frigid salutation of

"Oh, Mr. Frankover, I expected you," she began.

"Where is the late Mr. Oliphant's son Charles?"

"How should I know, Miss Waldie; am I his keeper?"

"Yes; you were for the time; he was committed to your charge to bring him home. Alas! what home?"

"Who said so?"

"One who saw and heard; I knew it only yesterday."

"But I never got the charge—he fled—and search was for the time in vain."

"He fled! but where is he?"

"Really, Miss Waldie. Was I his keeper, I ask again?"

"No; I know now you were not; but answer my question; where is he?"

"Well, that I cannot answer. If you will enquire at Mr. Elphinstone, who is in the law, in Edinburgh, or Mr. Princeton, they may be able to inform you."

"But who are they; what relationship?"

"That I know not, nor anything about them; but they seemed to know the young gentleman."

"Mr. Frankover, you know more than you are willing to disclose; but I shall take means of arriving at the facts. He shall not want a protector, though his cold blooded relatives gave him up. Who was his father's man of business in that unfortunate law affair you and Mr. Ostertoun had with him?"

"Mr. Anwood is his name; I know nothing of him."

"Well, sir, I shall get nothing more from you, I perceive. You know where the boy is?"

"Just so far as Mr. Elphinstone chose to communicate, and you can apply to him."

"Very well. I may have trouble—and at my years—you will tell me nothing more?"

"I really cannot."

"It might be better for you hereafter to have been more explicit; but I think we have done."

"And is this the object of your request of my attendance. I might express surprise, perhaps, something more; but wish to say nothing disagreeable."

"Ah! Mr. Frankover, take my flighting as easily as you may, I am but a woman; but if you had acted honestly to the Oliphant family, as their friendship to you required, it would not have been necessary for me to take the boy's part in this way."

"They suffered nothing at my hands; all was done in due course of law. You are attacking the judges of the land, not me."

"I understand you, sir. Much depends on the way matters are laid before them."

He started for a moment; but resuming his easy indifferent manner, said "all was according to law."

"I am unable to judge of that; but you will tell me nothing more?"

"I repeat that I cannot."

"Then our conversation may terminate. If you think I have been hasty and unreasonable with you, and if it be so, I shall regret it; but I leave it to time and your own conscience."

He was allowed to depart by his pertinacious questioner. The nature of the enquiries took him somewhat by surprise, and he perceived he had told her a little more than was expedient, but she was so instant and straightforward; "and the old fool," he muttered to himself, "has so many odd ways, there is no finding her out before hand. She may seek him, but that will not hurt us much, and I was entitled to his custody by the general consent at the time. I sent Adamson to bring him off."

Besides it occurred to him that, even if she

found Charles Oliphant, it was probable it would only end in her making some provision for him, which wealth enabled, and favour prompted her to do; and if he came to reside with Miss Waldie, then he would be more immediately under his own eye.

CHAPTER XXIII.

In the evening Mr. Frankover rode into Woodport, as Miss Waldie had in their conversation let drop some hints that showed she knew perfectly well what occurred on the occasion of the late Morden's funeral, a knowledge that could have been derived only from one who was present, and him he rightly conjectured to be Mr. Laurence, with whom of all who were there she was most likely to have met.

Mr. Frankover's antecedents and general character were exceedingly well known in the burgh, and on his putting up at the inn and appearing in the street none had objects he was likely to advance. Mr. Deacon did not propose

a Missionary contribution nor a perusal of the Report containing Mr. Wauchton's labours in the conversion of the South Sea Islanders; nor did Baillie Wogan approach him to submit the claims of the poor to the pump-well. Both of them knew very well he cared nothing about either the benighted heathen in the distant parts of the globe, nor the suffering poor who were occasionally crossing him in the street. There was no cordial salutation of him on the part of any of the magnates, but a distant or respectful bow that indicated much more compulsion than any thing else, but which he preferred, as thus he knew he was feared if he was not loved. Even the little fellows at play in the clean dry street sunk their voices, stopped their games, and stood silent and gazing till he was past. Some of them had family histories in memory in which he had appeared to use the machinery of the law to the torture of a mother, or the ill suppressed rage and curse of a father.

He repaired to Mr. Laurence's office sure of a cordial reception there, his interest with men

who had money to borrow or to deposit being very well known to that worldly man by experience; besides his influence with the Lairds and their tenants in the country around.

On seeing him Mr. Laurence broke out,—

"Ah! Mr. Frankover, I am so happy—it is so long since—"

"Well, Mr. Laurence, I am come now to inquire what it is you have said to that old hag, Miss Waldie, about the boy Oliphant."

"Oh! Mr. Frankover, I really said nothing but what I knew."

"But what call had you to tell even what you knew?"

Mr. Laurence felt he was betwixt two hostile fires, and would have been glad to remain neutral,—a spectator of, without engaging in the war. He would not disoblige either, and now he was in danger from both, and about an affair which however interesting to them was altogether indifferent to him. Recollecting himself for a moment he said,—

"The lady came on me so suddenly that I had

"Mr. Frankover, you must not think you excel me in knowledge of that ground. I have known it ever since I was a boy, and have said no more than the truth."

On such a pleasing subject Mr. Frankover was ready to hear a worldly man dilate, and forgave him the untoward communication which he had made to Miss Waldie on account of his appreciation, first of his own merit, and next of the good qualities of his estate.

There was one person, too, often seen in the street of Woodport, where he had once held his head high enough, who had become aware of Mr. Frankover being in the town; and he was hovering about the door of the inn in expectation of his return, as well as had made enquiry at the hostler to be sure he was not gone.

"No, Mr. Spears, he is not gone."

"Thank you, thank you; I shall just wait about a little."

He crept along under the shadow of the houses, and returned and passed and re-passed again and again; and still as Mr. Frankover did

not make his appearance, he put the same question a second time.

"No; indeed, Mr. Spears, he is not gone, and it is past the time he ordered his horse. I expect him every minute."

"Thank you, thank you; it is too much trouble I give you."

"No, no, Mr. Spears."

"Yes, it is; it is, indeed; but I must see him before he goes."

There was an air of faded respectability about this person that spoke of better times, of comfort and prosperity. His black coat was threadbare, indeed; his neckcloth dingy, his hat brown with age, and his shoes worn away; the stockings had been mended all too often; the breeches were worn at the knees; the waistcoat daubed with snuff, which he used immoderately, but still the *tout ensemble* spoke that same quondam respectability, which the humble servant acknowledged at once, and which one or two of those passing, by a nod seemed to indorse, though he would have dispensed with their recognition. He

had nothing to hope from them which he wanted. Perhaps they had supplied him, till, despairing of relief from a craving that was never satisfied, they desisted; and they could not reclaim him, for the dark cloud of life had settled on his head, never to be removed, and only to be partially illuminated by the fire-water that deceitfully restored for a time the healthful play of his feelings, when his wit and fancy were the delight of those who would pay the price of the excitement. To the cares of conscience were superadded the gnawing pains of nervous suffering, never permitting their victim to rest till he had deadened them, for a time, with that fatal remedy; when he seemed himself, and his vigour of thought, gaiety, and wit were restored, to take revenge on the pity or contempt of the world by sarcasms against its hypocrisy, its falsehood, and deceit.

Mr. Frankover was detained by an agent who had tracked him to Mr. Laurence's, and was privileged with a few minutes' conversation in private as he was about leaving. The agent was now employed by Frankover to do the same

legal business which, before his sudden elevation, would have been done by himself; and on this occasion he had attached the effects of the coach proprietor who had been so bold in his expressions when the late Mr. Oliphant was his fellow-passenger, for payment of a bill which Frankover had bought up for the purpose. The debtor could pay if a little time were given, and the agent represented this, in the hope that he would accede to the delay.

"I will guarantee payment myself, Mr. Frankover: he is an honest man, but a little pressed just at present. If all debts due to him were paid, he would not remain your debtor."

"Not an hour, sir. Recover my debt by the usual process. I get no delays from any one."

"But I will guarantee payment if he does not settle the debt in a week."

"When can you sell his effects?"

"To-morrow."

"Let it be done, then. Get me my money or sell. I will have no guarantee; not yours cer-

tainly. I employed you. Do your duty at your peril."

"Well, well, Mr. Frankover, it shall be done; but the poor man's family—it will ruin him."

"What have I to do with all this. You are unfit for your business, sir, and should have been bred in the soft goods line. Let me know by to-morrow evening this matter is concluded, otherwise I hold you answerable, and will not employ you again."

This conversation had the effect of ruffling Mr. Frankover's temper anew, which had nearly regained its wonted calmness, under the influence of the extravagant praises of Mr. Laurence, and his memory recurred to the whole subject of Miss Waldie's questions and Mr. Laurence's information. He was exactly in the condition most fitted to vent his ill-humour upon any one who gave him opportunity, when the poor watcher for him, who had still lingered on, ventured timidly forward, as he came in haste to the inn.

"Oh, Mr. Frankover, just this once; let me entreat of you some little assistance."

"Begone you drunken fool! am I to be annoyed perpetually with your demands."

"Just this once; I'm in sad want to-night. Pray excuse me?"

"No, I will not. Am I to relieve all the beggars and blackguards in the country. Go to the Session."

"For God's sake, Mr. Frankover, I am really miserable. Remember things were once different."

"You have reduced yourself to this pass by your own drunken propensities, which you would continue to gratify from my pocket."

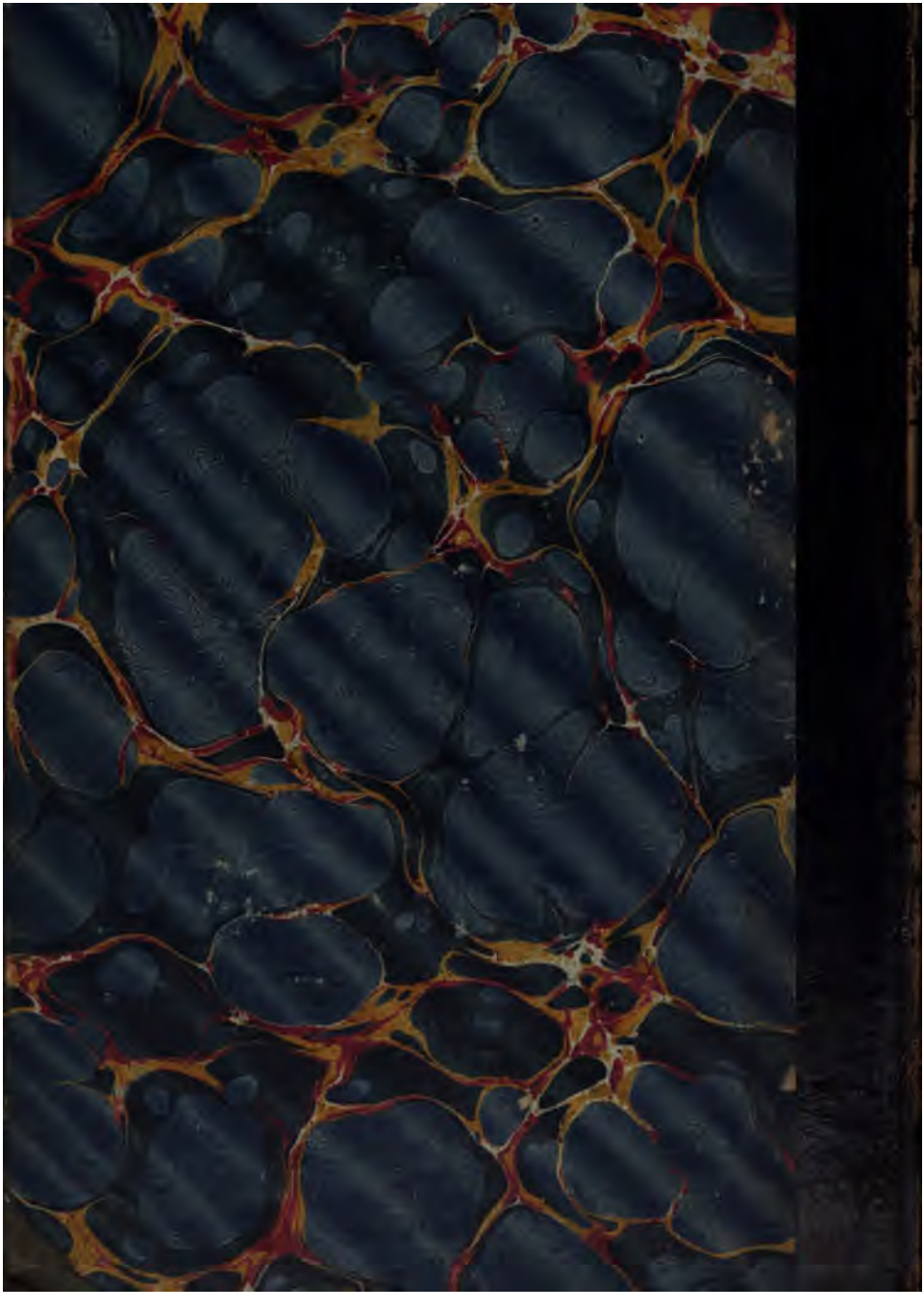
"What can I do? What should I do? Say anything, but give me one shilling. I shall not trouble you again."

"The old song, I have heard so often. Get out of my way."

"For Heaven's sake have some feeling for me. The men around will hear you."

"And why should they not? Are you unknown to them. Begone."

At this moment his horse was brought out, which he mounted and rode off, leaving the poor forlorn wretch to glide away under the shadow of the street—it was very nearly dark—from which he had emerged so often, in expectation of the means of satisfying his craving appetite. The hostler had heard some of the angry words, while he got his shilling, and moved by an irresistible feeling of pity, followed and called "Mr. Spears." He turned. The man gave him the coin, he had got the moment before, which Spears clutched with muttered thanks, and went away to the nearest dram-shop. He was Frankover's old master.

END OF VOL. I.

T. C. Newby, Printer, 30, Welbeck-street, Cavendish-square.